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JIC MEETINGS * LONDON

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SECRET

[illegible]

J.I.C. [illegible] - AUGUST [illegible], 19[illegible]

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SICILY:

In reckoning Axis casualties, the basic figure for Italian troops was the estimate of 345,000 supposedly present on the island at the beginning of the campaign. This proved to be an overestimate by 66,000. Of the remainder, 65,000 were militia, [illegible], and base troops. Prisoners-of-war total 125,000, killed [illegible], evacuated wounded 5,000 and evacuated fit 30,000, making [illegible] active troops. This leaves 56,000 unaccounted for - possibly troops which took refuge in civilian clothes, or otherwise escaped attention.

Of the estimated 92,000 Germans, 7,000 are prisoners-of-war, 5,000 killed, 20,000 evacuated wounded, and [illegible] evacuated fit. Of the latter, 12,000 were flak troops, 11,000 were in the 20th Panzer Grenadier Division, 9,000 in the Hermann Goering and 15th Divisions, [illegible] in the Flieger Division, 3,500 miscellaneous, and 13,[illegible] base and service troops.

In material, the Germans lost 140 tanks and the Italians 180. The Germans lost 1500 vehicles and the Italians 3800. The Germans lost 190 anti-tank field guns and the Italians 1060. The Germans lost 70 anti-aircraft guns and the Italians 670.

The morale of the Germans is supposed to be high. There is to be sure, a reaction after the heavy fighting which means that the troops are scarcely in condition to renew such action immediately, and, indeed, the Italians are thought unlikely to constitute first-line troops at any time in the future.

ITALY:

Reinforcement is under way. The War Office, in a carefully defined phrase, indicated that "15 German divisions are involved in movements into Italy". Further details as to the identity of the divisions and the completion of their transfer are not available. It is thought that they came almost entirely from France. The chairman pointed out that several of the 15 divisions are not in full strength, as, for example, the four evacuated from Sicily, which between them are equivalent to only two full divisions. There is a tendency for the forces to move southwards - at least, no tendency has been observed to move northwards.

German L.R.B. are based chiefly at Foggia while the fighters are based at Foggia, Naples, and in defence of the toe.

S.E.F., after a long rest, have shown greatly increased activity. On the 15th and 16th they began to cover evacuation by thrusts over the Straits. American raids over Foggia and Naples have provoked strong and determined fighter resistance.

L.R.B. struck twice in strength and once in medium strength on the 16th, 17th, and 18th against shipping convoys off Bone and Bizerte. The results were slight.

F.B. have been held back this week to permit building up. Of three units located in the area, only one was heavily engaged.

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Naval units from Taranto including two Cavours [illegible] were exercising, possibly at battle practice, in the [illegible] garded as odd in view of the fuel shortage, but it may [illegible] effort to maintain morale.

THE WEST:

German forces in France have probably fallen from 30 divisions to 32 by reason of the moves to Italy.

C.A.F. action has been chiefly defensive. Fighter interception has reached considerable proportions, and fighter sorties have averaged 300 per day.

On the 17th-18th, the Germans staged nearly a maximum effort against England with a force of over 60. Only the German communique, however, revealed that Lincoln was the chief target, for no pattern could be made of the bombing reports. F.W.200s made a great effort on the 15th against a convoy, with 23 sorties, and they hit two ships.

There has been a slight increase in night-fighter strength with the appearance of some new units and of one which was withdrawn some time ago from the Mediterranean. It is now known that a S.E.F. group was withdrawn from South Russia a month ago for transfer to the West.

There are reports that the main German naval units in North Norway may exchange positions with the ships in the Baltic - this doubtless for morale purposes. A report on the 16th claimed that the Graf Zeppelin had been seen steaming in the Baltic, but reconnaissance shows that it is still in its berth.

Subs have been quiet this week. Their activity has declined in all areas and there is a record low of only 30 or 60 at sea. The subs in distant posts have doubtless been affected by the loss of supply submarines and it is possible that their replacements may have to share supplies with them if they are to reach home. One ship has been sunk off Madagascar.

There are reports of a considerable fall in morale in German naval ports, particularly submarine bases.

M.E.W. indicated that the German campaign for closing down small enterprises has ceased. This, it is thought, may be a consequence of Allied air-raids.

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RUSSIA:

On the Leningrad and Lake Ilmen fronts, the Germans report Russian attacks, but there is no mention of [illegible] in Russian communiques.

In the Smolensk area, the Russians have made no progress of the railway from Sukhinidse; in the south, they have advanced six miles. The Germans are believed to have transferred two panzer divisions from the Briansk area to the Smolensk front.

At Briansk, the Russians have made some progress to within 20 miles of the city on the northwest and east.

At Kharkov, the main fighting has taken place. The Germans staged persistent counter-attacks from the 15th to the 17th along the river Vorska, but these failed. The Russians resumed their advance and pushed 20 miles to Lebedin. On the southeast, the Russians continued to claim advances and they have captured Rnilov. This morning the Germans announced the evacuation of Kharkov.

There have been attacks at Izyum, and considerable fighting on the Mius and on the Taman, but without major changes.

In commenting on Russian claims published at the end of the week, the War Office pointed out that the number of tanks specified would represent the first-line strength of 42 panzer divisions. The other figures are equally unlikely. On the other hand, observers report large German losses and some panzer divisions are known to be down to 50% of normal strength.

[illegible] reported the opening of a new blast furnace at Magnitogorsk where the total figure is now 2-3/4 million tons. This shows that the Russians are capable even now of considerable capital construction.

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THE FAR EAST:

Burma:

There are further indications that Maungdaw is being reinforced. Concentrations at points on the Mayu Peninsula suggest [illegible] be a forward movement east of the Mayu Ridge. No aircraft were sighted all week.

New Guinea:

The Japs have been driven out of their positions south of Salamaua. Two air units have moved from the western to the eastern part of New Guinea. This move was followed by the raid on Wewak. Alleged losses from this raid and other actions total over 300 for this area, yet official strength returns so far received show a loss of only 138. Before final figures can be reached more information must be awaited.

The Solomons:

Bairoka is held by some 500-700 Japs, who are being pressed closely. Landings were made on Vella Lavella on the 15th, and the Allies are eliminating the positions held by about 250 Japs. On the 19th, the Japs attempted to land 1500 or 2000 troops from 20 barges accompanied by 4 destroyers; American destroyers damaged two of the escort and hit a third, then attacked the barges and are thought to have left only 600 troops from this force. On the night of the 19th/20th, the Japs attempted reinforcement by submarine, but this was frustrated.

Near Rabaul, three Jap ships of about 7000 tons, with deck loads of barges, were sunk. Supplies are being brought to Vila in subs and barges, and perhaps also by the same means to the outpost on Choiseul.

Miscellaneous:

Four medium ships were probably sunk by the raid on the 18th against Balikpapan.

The new railway between Siam and Burma has been completed for 44 kilometers from Chantaburi(?) and the banks built in for 66 kilometers. If the same progress has been effected from the other end the railway can easily be finished in the next dry season.

Only one submarine is in the Indian Ocean, and there have been no attacks. One Liberty ship was torpedoed off Espiritu Santo, and one off Tonga, but neither was sunk. One Jap sub was sunk off New Caledonia.

Events in the Aleutians are obscure. Allied forces landed at Kiska on the 15th/16th and found none of the estimated garrison of 10,000 Japanese.

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J.I.C. MEETING - AUGUST 16, 1943.

SICILY.

The Eighth Army is advancing up the east coast. It took Riposto on the 12th, and two days later cut the Lateral road by Piano Praddo. It is now in the area of Santa Teresa. Early in the week the terraced vineyards on Mount Etna afforded excellent ground for delaying tactics, but during the last day there has been no contact with the enemy and the Germans are withdrawing rapidly. A screen of Italians is being drawn along the line between Milazzo and a point on the east coast halfway between Riposto and Messina. The American forces in the north enjoyed marked success in bypassing obstacles and progressing by leap-frog tactics of advance landing parties. They are now 15 miles from Messina and are by-passing Milazzo. The evacuation of Germans is in full swing and may have reached the rate of 10,000 per day. This operation, carried on by landing craft and small boats, covered by 200 A.C. guns planted chiefly on the mainland shore of the Straits, is extremely hard to interrupt.

It is estimated that there remain on the Island 55,000 Italians and 37,000 Germans. Reports suggest that the Germans are trying to fortify the perimeter of Messina, but it is expected that the campaign will be concluded as early as three days from now.

In respect of morale, it has recently been observed that prisoners of war, tired and depressed, have begun to complain of bad leadership. This, of course, occurred likewise towards the end of the Tunisian campaign. The prisoners up to August 6th numbered 128,000. Many Italians escaped capture by donning civilian clothes.

The Axis have carried an increased effort over the Straits of Messina, sending out fighter patrols to cover the evacuation. The effort may have reached its peak two or three days, but the original scale was very small indeed. Apparently, little attempt is being made to provide ground support in Sicily. Offensive action is concentrated chiefly against shipping, and particularly against ships which are harbouring land personnel.

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ITALY:

The order of battle in Italy is now reckoned as follows:

South - elements of four German divisions, equal to about two divisions, with miscellaneous forces to a total of 60,000, together with flak and other forces to a full total, south of Naples, of 80,000; also four Italian divisions with incidental troops to a total of 300,000.

Sardinia - four Italian divisions with auxiliaries to a total of 187,000; one German division with miscellaneous and flak troops to a total of 30,000.

Corsica - two Italian divisions and one German brigade.

North and Central Italy - eleven Italian divisions, plus two divisions which are re-forming; the number of Germans is uncertain, but present reckoning counts two divisions with probably two more arriving.

The total of Italian troops in Italy, therefore, comprises 15 divisions with half a division in Sicily and four in Sardinia. Two Italian divisions are thought to be coming from France, where the Italian garrison is reduced to three divisions. There is an unconfirmed report that the Italians are leaving Corsica.

The total of German divisions in Italy is now reckoned at 8, or possibly 9 if both divisions from France move in.

Reports of German intentions leave it unclear whether the Germans intend to hold on in Southern Italy, or to increase their forces there.

As for the Italians, reports have come that they are withdrawing from southern Greece to north of the Isthmus of Corinth, and that they may retire further. Numerous towns in the south are said to have been handed over to the partisans, and in some places the Italians are reported ready to surrender.

In recent Allied air raids, only Italians have attempted interception. Some 60-70 Italian fighters rose against the latest raid on Rome, but they proved ineffective.

For the first time since the invasion of Sicily, the Germans have made a determined attack on a convoy in the Mediterranean - this time about 150

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miles east of Gibraltar with 60 or 70 aircraft. Their claim of 270,000 tons damage is fantastic, for they hit only two ships and both of these have arrived in port.

There are signs that the Germans are now preparing for the next stage of operations in two respects. First, they are developing the west coast of Greece and the area of Albania, possibly to receive aircraft from Southern Italy, possibly to facilitate interference with raids on Rumania and Southern Germany from Lybia. Second, they are said to be developing Corsica, doubtless as a precaution against the possibility that Sardinia will become untenable; no aircraft units have yet been transferred there.

The only movements by the Italian navy have been sorties by two cruisers in the Gulf of Taranto, and the transfer of the Littorio, now re-christened Italia, from Genoa to Spezzia.

The distribution of the Italian navy between east and west coasts, which must now, with the closing of the Straits, be regarded as final, leaves on the west three 6" cruisers in Genoa and three Italia battleships and two 6" cruisers in Spezzia, while, for the east, Taranto harbors two Cavour battleships with one 6" and one Regolo cruiser.

M.E.W. reported that between the date when the regime changed and August 1st there was no significant change in the transfer of commodities between Germany and Italy; there was some diversion of routes, but by July 29th the shipment of grain from Italy had been resumed.

In the eastern area traffic has shifted from the Trieste route and from Balkan railways to the route by way of the Danube and the Black Sea to the Aegean.

[redacted]

Order of battle: one division previously in France is now in Russia, where the total is 191 (in addition there are one Spanish and 7 Hungarian and Rumanian divisions). In Germany and the Protectorate, there is an increase of one to thirty-eight, because two new identifications have been made - one of an administrative division and one of a defensive division - while one division has moved to France.

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In France the total is now 39, after allowing for the transfer of 2 divisions to Italy, of one to Russia, and of one from Germany.

The grand total of German divisions is now reckoned at 333.

The fighter defences of Western Germany continue to be strengthened, possibly at the expense of the G.A.F. in Russia. Over half the total German strength in SEF is now on the Western Front.

The raid on Wiener Neustadt poses a new problem in the dispostion of fighters. The opposition actually encountered was negligible. Some defence must be found against possible repetitions of this raid and it seems likely that this can be spared only from the Western Front. As yet, no reaction has been observed, but it must come.

Activity by the G.A.F. has increased over the Bay of Biscay. The success of Allied patrols in bottling up the subs has forced the G.A.F. to increase its effort, and it has gained some success. Control of the air to the north-west of Spain is the present problem of the Allies; but it is expected that the G.A.F. will be unable to maintain its present pressure.

The main units of the German navy have not moved, except that the Scheer left Copenhagen for the Baltic on the 10th.

Only 70 subs are operating in the Atlantic, and they have had no success. On the other hand, German subs in the area of Mauritius and Madagascar have sunk three ships, and little opposition to them can yet be organised.

The morale of submarine crews is being bolstered up by pop talks. The highest possible decoration has been bestowed upon one of the captains. On the other hand, the Germans have issued figures of sinkings to cover the whole of the last six months so as to conceal the recent reduction. It is learned from a P/W lieutenant that a submarine captain was recently court-martialled and shot for not pressing home an attack upon a well-defended convoy.

[illegible]

The Germans report Russian attacks south of Lake Ladoga, but no confirmation has come from the Russians; it may be that holding attacks have been made here.

In the Smolensk area, the Russians announce an offensive southwest and south of Vienna. They have made good progress along the railway between [illegible] and Smolensk.

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At Briansk the Germans seem to be falling back. The Russians now have Karachev and Dimitrovsk, and they are 25 miles from Briansk. It is possible that the Germans are withdrawing deliberately to the line of the river Desna.

At Kharkov, the Russians have made good progress to within 30 miles of Poltava. They have cut the railway between Poltava and Kharkov, and they control all but the end of the line between Sumi and Kharkov. On the 13th, the Germans opened counter-attacks in the area of Poltava, but these are reported to have been repulsed.

Reports indicate that some German divisions have only 80 tanks. It further appears that panzer divisions are being switched rapidly between various parts of the front. These are among the indications that German resources are badly strained.

It is considered possible that the Kharkov offensive, if it develops, may endanger the hold of the Germans south of the Donets and drive them to a line from Melitopol to the Dnieper.

The G.A.F. in Russia has probably lost some fighters to the Western Front. There are indications that it is falling back to airfields roughly 20 miles northwest and southwest of Poltava, and even to fields on the west bank of the Dnieper.

The Russians have been attacking transport on the Sea of Azov with some success. They further claim to have sunk a large merchant vessel off the Crimea.

[illegible]

[illegible]

In the Arakan area there are some indications that the Japanese in the forward area are short of supplies. They have driven the inhabitants out of [illegible] towards the north.

In the Chin Hills there are indications that the Japanese are preparing to raid.

In [illegible] only patrolling activity has occurred.

In Upper Burma trouble has arisen between Chinese and British. The Chinese moved in 20 miles east of Fort Norts, arrested some head-men and

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attempted to seize the British Civil Officer, who escaped. Representations have been made to the Chinese authorities.

Air activity has been sore.

South-West Pacific:

In New Guinea, Japanese counter-attacks 6 miles south of Salamaua have been repulsed. The Japanese defences, however, of the log and earth type, are hard to overcome.

In the New Guinea area 24 barges were destroyed between 27 July and 4 August, with a total carrying capacity of 6000 tons.

In the Solomons, the few hundred Japanese in the Bairoka area are gradually being exterminated.

One unit of 20 or 30 Japanese aircraft may have moved south from the Kendates to the Bismarcks.

A new form of air activity is appearing. The raid on Port Darwin by 50 aircraft is the first such operation to occur at night. In the eastern sector, three small night raids have occurred. It is possible that a general tactical change is under way to avoid the losses incurred by day; as a result Japanese losses are much reduced, but so is the damage inflicted.

Reconnaissance over Rabaul on the 15th showed 1 heavy and 1 light cruiser, 4 destroyers, 6 subs, and 20 merchant ships which total 86,000 tons.

[redacted]

Reinforcements in the Malacca Straits suggest that the Japanese are strengthening their outlying defences.

The Japanese are said to have transferred to China 2 air units from Manchuria, but the report is considered doubtful.

American aircraft bombed Formosa and encountered 60 fighters, of which 6 were shot down. This effort tallies with the general estimate of air strength there.

American subs in Pacific waters have sunk 7 vessels and damaged 5.

[redacted]

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August 10, 1943.

SECRET.

London

J.I.C. MEETING - AUGUST 9, 1943.

SICILY:

At the beginning of the past fortnight, the 15th Army Group started to exert pressure upon the center of the Axis positions in order to prepare for the final assault, which opened on August 2nd. The Canadians worked up towards Centuripe, while the Highland Division seized high ground over Adrano. By this manoeuvre the Germans were jolted out of the Catania line. Catania itself fell into the hands of the 13th Corps on Thursday, and on Saturday the Allies seized Adrano and gained control of the road around Etna. They are thus moving on Randazzo and advancing up the coast from Acireale towards Riposto.

Indications suggest that Axis defence is suffering from lack of reserves. Clearly up to 10 days ago reinforcements were coming, but these have now ceased and the Germans are consequently forced to withdraw. They are, however, fighting obstinately. There are no indications that the Germans expect to evacuate, and it appears at present that the outcome will be another Cape Bon affair. Following the same analogy, the evacuation of specialist forces has already begun.

In Sicily, the Germans are thought to number 60,000, with a very doubtful estimate of 80 tanks, while the Italians number 90,000. Forces in Sardinia have changed little, comprising now 4 Italian field divisions, and miscellaneous troops making up 147,000, together with one division of Germans and extras to a total of [illegible]. In Corsica, there are 2 Italian field divisions, with extras, and about a brigade of Germans. Southern Italy contains two German field force divisions, plus flak forces and others, totalling [illegible]; the Italians have 4 field divisions, with coastal forces and others, totalling altogether [illegible]. In north and central Italy, there are only about [illegible] Germans, while the Italians have [illegible] divisions scattered about. In the immediate neighbourhood of Rome, there is a small detachment of Germans, including parachute troops, which may total between [illegible] and [illegible] together with 3 Italian divisions. The

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SECRET

total of German divisions in Italy and the Islands is, in overall order of battle, reckoned at 7.

Mention was made of the possibility that the Germans might draw a defence line from Rimini through Florence to Leghorn. Their ability to maintain this line would depend upon Italian cooperation in communications to the north. After that line they might stand on the Po.

The C.A.F. has done almost nothing in Sicily, with the exception of L.R.B. which until recently maintained an effort of 40 sorties per night. This effort dropped off during the last week and apparently the airforce cannot keep it up - the L.R.B. are operating now only every other night. Two attacks against Palermo were serious, but the other efforts have inflicted no significant damage.

Close support operation has been seriously hampered by the bombing of forward airfields in the toe of Italy. Only 20-30 sorties a day have been accomplished and the aircraft tend to refuse combat. It is thought that a good deal of re-equipping is being carried on in order to make up losses before the next stage of the campaign opens. Losses in Sicily are reckoned at 300, of which 200 German.

The Italian airforce shows signs of recovery. After the change of government the effort weakened for three or four days, but during the last week it has risen. F.B. have been active over Sicily. Furthermore, the policy begun by the previous regime of calling for volunteers has been continued, suggesting that the authorities anticipate need for an effective airforce several months from now, when the training of those now is completed.

The Italian fleet has shown a good deal of activity. Two groups of 4 cruisers have been seen near Sardinia, one on the 6th and one on the 8th, though to be sure, the latter turned for home as soon as they were sighted. The Littorio battleship, in dock at Genoa, was observed on the 5th to be ready to emerge. Two Cavour class battleships from Taranto were sighted on the 7th steaming in the Gulf of Taranto, though one was then seen to return to port. A Regolo cruiser had on the 3rd returned to Taranto from Augusta. The Cadorna and a Regolo class cruiser were seen on the 8th at Taranto. All this activity may represent a tightening up of the

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navy comparable to that of the airforce. Submarines have not shared in this renewed activity. There is a concentration of small craft, barges, E-boats and others, in the Straits of Messina, and these could evacuate a considerable number of troops over the narrow Straits.

In respect of morale in the Italian navy, not much is known, but the Admiralty rather expects that the ships would be scuttled rather than surrendered to any power. In other quarters, there seems to be doubt on this point.

THE WEST:

There have been movements over the past fortnight but no definite information, except that one division seems to have left Germany for Southeastern Europe where the total is now 15. There may be some shift of divisions from Western Europe to Italy and Russia; something is happening but it is not yet clear just what that is.

The R.A.F. expressed great satisfaction with recent events, and pointed out that as a result of recent American and British attacks upon Germany, as much as half of the total German S.E.F. strength is now on the Western front, and particularly in Northwest Germany; the amount in this area equals the combined total of S.E.F. on the Russian and Mediterranean fronts. The main expansion of the G.A.F. for the past year has consisted in S.E.F., of which the I.E. strength has risen by 265 aircraft - and all of these have been absorbed by the Western front. Furthermore, during the past 6 months, the main center of fighter strength has shifted from coastal defence in France and the Low Countries to the defence of Germany proper. The tendency has been to build up defence forces between the Scheldt and the Elbe.

The main units of the German navy have changed little. Information is now definite that the Gneisenau and Leipzig have paid off. Reconnaissance showed oil lighters alongside the Graf Zeppelin near Stettin, but this is regarded as of no significance.

Subs have had little success over the fortnight. They continue their policy of maximum dispersion, and their greatest accomplishment has been

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[redacted] reported a marked fall in [redacted] morale of such prisoners [redacted] lly, but over the last 2 or has [redacted] and it is reported that over 40 3 weeks the f[redacted] percent of recent [redacted] without hesitation that Germany has lost the war.

The closing of transit through Sweden increased the burden upon German shipping by 50,000 tons. It is expected that to avoid the hazardous trip round the bulge of Norway, much use will be made of railroads between Oslo and Trondhjem. Possibly the inescapable decrease in leave will contribute to deterioration of morale among German troops in Norway.

M.E.W. quoted figures to illustrate the marked transfer of shipping from Hamburg since the raids, and indicated that the necessary shift in shipping routes would impose further strain upon other German ports; while the Admiralty reported that reconnaissance of the yards in Hamburg gives good reason to suppose that the 22 subs usually under construction there may have been considerably diminished.

RUSSIA

At Leningrad there has been intensive Russian reconnaissance. On the Orel front, the Russians continued to close in, and on August 4th they broke into Orel. Their operations were continuously hampered by mud. The line now runs in a north-south direction 15 miles west of Orel, and it has been shortened by 30 miles. If, as has been suggested, the Germans shorten their line even further before Briansk they may be able to build up for themselves some small reserve. The lack of reserves in general is illustrated by the transfer of a panzer corps from the Mius front to Kharkov, although it had only recently been shifted south because of the attack at Taganrog.

The Russian attack at Kharkov on August 3rd was wholly unexpected [redacted]. The town itself was taken on the 5th; the success was thoroughly [redacted] the Russians have penetrated to Bogodukhov and are now due [redacted] south of Kharkov.

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The Russian General Staff report that they are maintaining activity on the whole front in order to contain the Germans, who are forced to move their reserves about as action develops on the initiative of the Russians. A report is given some weight which says that the German High Command at first expected to hold the eastern front easily, but now believes it will be a hard job to withstand the Russians.

The G.A.F. in Russia is experiencing serious lack of reserves, and, like the ground forces, has to shuffle its resources to meet the Russian threats. First line strength has been concentrated in defence of Kharkov, and some units have already moved there from Orel. In other words, the G.A.F. can reinforce one part of the front only by robbing another, and some sectors are left without cover. In the Kuban, they are relying more and more upon Rumanian and Hungarian A.F.

It is thought that the G.A.F. will have suffered considerably in the evacuating of its airfields. The strength on the whole Russian front is estimated to have decreased by 300 to a current total of 1,800.

FAR EAST:

Burma:

Some Japanese reinforcements have arrived in the Maungdaw area, and in the region east of the Mayu Ridge. There has been no air activity/

New Guinea:

Since the end of July, the Japanese have been attacked around Salamaua. There are indications that their casualties have been serious and that they are apprehensive. The Japanese airfields are under fire, and they may have to fall back on Lae. Air activity has been small. Supplies continue to be ferried by lighter along the coast, and subs have been sighted carrying deck cargoes.

Japanese strength in Eastern New Guinea is 30,000, of which 12,000 in the Salamaua area - the rest scattered in garrisons.

Solomons:

The Munda airfield has been taken and all Japanese resistance cleared from that area. There remains only a garrison of 1100 at

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SECRET

Bairoka. In the last stage of the campaign, Japanese casualties are estimated at 1600, and only 28 prisoners; the total casualties in the campaign are about 3000.

The strength in the Northern Solomons is 30,000, of whom 10,000 in Northern New Georgia, 17,000 in Buin and Shortlands, and the rest scattered. In New Britain the strength is 45,000, chiefly concentrated at Rabaul.

There has been some movement of navy units. On the 2nd of August, 2 heavy cruisers and one light cruiser were seen near Rabaul, and on the 7th, 2 heavy cruisers and 3 light cruisers were seen approaching Rabaul from the north. Shipping, on the other hand, has decreased in Rabaul, where, on the 2nd, there were only 14 ships totalling 50,000 tons. A considerable concentration of barges was observed there.

The J.A.F. in the southwestern Pacific area has increased by a reinforcement of 60 to a current total of 600. The strength in the western sector is hard to estimate and the present calculation of 300 may be exaggerated.

Air activity in the Solomons over the past fortnight has, except for one bomber attack, consisted entirely of fighter sorties. On three occasions there was offensive fighter action. The effort in the western sector was negligible.

Miscellaneous:

The disposition of the J.A.F. in the north is unchanged. The strength in Japan is 600, of which 70-80 in the Kuriles.

There are indications of a re-organization in the navy airforce. New groups are being created - probably a form of dilution. Air groups which have hitherto included two classes of planes are now being divided into two groups.

In China between the 24th and 28th, the Japanese sent 150 bomber sorties over American airfields. Their losses have been serious for, though bomber casualties amounted to no more than 10 percent, fighter casualties ran up to 60 or 70 percent.

American light forces bombarded the main camp on Kiska and Gertrude Cove. Kiska and Sagula are the only islands still occupied in the Aleutians.

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SECRET.

J.I.C. MEETING - JULY 19, 1943.

SECRET:

Land Forces:

The VII and VIII Armies, composing the XV Army Group, now firmly hold about one-third of the Island.

The VIII Army has advanced in two thrusts, of which the first was directed northwards by way of Augusta. Early on Tuesday the leading brigade of the Corps entered Augusta. This brigade was then temporarily cut off by enemy counter-attack, but the situation was restored by Wednesday afternoon. Meanwhile, on Tuesday night, parachutists had been dropped to secure the heavily mined Primasola bridge. They removed the charges and held the bridge until their ammunition was almost exhausted. Even so they withdrew but a short distance and soon joined with the armoured brigade which was coming to their assistance, whereupon the Allied forces reoccupied the bridge. By Thursday morning an infantry division had consolidated the Allied position there. Latest reports of Sunday afternoon place the front three miles north of the Gornalunga on a line extending 16 miles inland from the coast, with two infantry divisions disposed along it.

In a second thrust inland to the northwest, Canadian forces of the VIII Army have made good progress, advancing from Ragusa towards Vizzini. They have now pushed on towards Enna and were last reported to be on the outskirts of that town.

The VII Army has been advancing systematically into the interior northwestwards from the shallow bridgehead which, on Tuesday, was bounded by Vizzini, Niscemi, Ricci, and Comicatti. Since then, the left flank has pushed west and taken Porto Empedocle and Agrigento. The latest news is that these forces have also taken Caltanisetta.

For maintenance, the VIII Army has had the use of two good ports - Syracuse and Augusta - so that its position has been satisfactory, and during the past week supplies have been up to program. The American forces labored under greater difficulty, for, until they occupied Porto

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Empedocle, they had only beaches and were forced to use landing-craft.

The capacity of Augusta is 1400 tons per day, and of Syracuse 1800 tons, while the Americans hope to unload 1300 tons at Porto Empedocle. In one day, on the beaches of the Pachino Peninsula, 6000 tons were unloaded.

By July 14th, the VIII Army had landed 312 tanks, and lost 18 by the sinking of two barges. This does not mean that more tanks may not be expected. The American forces successfully landed all their tanks to the number of about 450.

By the 16th of July the VIII Army had taken 12,000 prisoners, and the VII Army 17,000. The morale of the Italian troops is reported to be low, and they displayed little enthusiasm for either their German allies or their own regime. The population is not unfriendly.

In answer to a question it was agreed that the Germans have done most of the serious fighting. Their line pivots on their left flank at Catania, where the Hermann Goering Division is probably settled, while the XV Panzer Division is placed on the right. The Germans may be sending over more men, but it is not thought that they are transferring to the Island any full division.

The general intention of the Axis Command, so far as it is yet revealed, seems to involve the abandonment of the western part of the Island to Italian troops. The War Office reporter ventured a more or less personal opinion that the Germans might be planning on a defensive line extending around the southern slopes of Mount Etna.

Air Forces

The Axis air forces at the start of operations comprised, for offensive action by day, some 50-300 F.B. in Sicily, and 60 in Sardinia. Offensive action by night was carried out by L.B.B.s on moonlight nights S.E. might also participate. In the area of Italy and Southern France, there were enough L.B.B. for an effort of over 100. Defensive forces comprised 200 S.E.F. in Sicily, and 60-70 in Sardinia.

Upon the opening of operations the G.A.F. delivered up to 300 defensive sorties and numerous offensives by F.B. This effort fell off, however, until by the 15th defensive action was slight. F.B.

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meanwhile were being supplemented by L.R.B. and also by T.E.F. last a new phenomenon in the Mediterranean area, which is assumed to mean that the F.B.s must have suffered severely, so that their serviceability may have fallen as low as 50%.

The S.E.F. must have suffered considerable difficulties from the bombing of their fields and of communications. It is, in fact, now doubted that any S.E.F. or D.B. are actually based in Sicily, though they may still use fields there as advance bases. They must be operating from home bases in the toe and heel in Italy. The number of S.E.F. that remains in the area is hard to estimate; the figures 90-130 were suggested.

T.E.F. are continuing their effort with a maximum of 20 sorties per day. The total defensive effort now possible by T.E.F. and D.B. may be about 90 per day.

The effort of L.R.B. has touched 120, but is normally about 50-60. Their target, in general, is shipping on the east coast of the Island. The results, and the casualties, are unknown; one one occasion, 10 L.R.B. were lost, and a possible average is 4 or 5 per night. Its distant bases have spared the L.R.B. force from losses commensurate with those of the close support forces. Reinforcements have probably been drawn from the reservoir in Southern France, and it is thought that an effort of 100 L.R.B. can be maintained.

In answer to a question, the Air Ministry stated that photographic reconnaissance gives good evidence of the success of Allied bombing efforts. Excellent results have been obtained on Sicilian airfields; for instance, at one time at least half of the 12 satellite fields at Gerbini were out of action. It is unknown to what extent the southern fields are being used by the Allies.

Naval Forces

One 6" cruiser has sailed from Spezzia to Genoa, and one in the return direction. There are at Genoa, one battleship and three 6" cruisers, and at Spezzia two Littorio battleships and two 6" cruisers. One cruiser passed through the Straits of Messina and reached Taranto, although the claim has been made that she was hit by two torpedoes, not to speak of her being fired at by Italian shore batteries. Likewise, one ship of the

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Regole class, formerly at Ancona, is now certainly at Taranto, where, in consequence, the force comprises two battleships and a cruiser in the outer harbor, and two cruisers in the inner harbor.

10 Italian submarines are in operation, three-quarters of them around the south and east of Italy. Two have been sunk and one captured, and the rest have achieved no notable success. German subs have decreased in number to 17 as a result of two sinkings, and only 6 or 7 are at sea.

Allied M.T.B. and M.G.B. have been active in the Straits against E-boats. The Allies have sunk 25,000 tons of Italian shipping.

THE WEST:

The German order of battle in France is unchanged, with a total of 40 divisions; there include 18 to 20 offensive divisions, of which 12 or 14 are in the northwest coastal area.

Train moves suggest that a division may be moving into Italy, starting out from the eastern area towards the northeast - possibly to travel around Switzerland. There is no sign that the Germans expect to take over the Italian zone of occupation in France.

Certain train movements suggest that [illegible] equipment is being brought in to hasten the building up of the Stalingrad divisions.

F.W. [illegible] at Bordeaux have been active. They made two attacks during the week and one yesterday. The 7 aircraft which attacked a convoy last night hit nothing, but, in general, these planes have lately attained considerable accuracy and are described as a menace.

L.R.B. operated on three nights, the 12th, 13th and 15th. It is thought that a new type participated - the No.410 - a faster, lighter plane combining characteristics of the light bomber and the T.E.F. The use of these for short journeys may continue. They carry only a small load.

The major units of the German fleet have not moved.

[illegible] submarines are at sea in the Atlantic. No attacks took place in the northern ocean. The subs tend to push out to the softer spots, and two ships were attacked in convoy off West Africa, and two independent ships off Rio. Five or six German subs are operating in the southwest corner of the Indian Ocean, but with small success. On the other hand, [illegible] attacks were made on submarines in the Bay, and sinkings for the

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month already total 13-16, which is regarded as highly satisfactory in view of the lack of attacks on convoys.

It was remarked that German hopes based upon the new armament being installed on their submarines may fail, for it has been observed that gunners serving the 3 A.A. guns are liable to be washed off the deck by the effect of depth bombs at a distance of 50 yards. With the balance of effectiveness so heavily against them it is thought that these gunners will quickly lose enthusiasm.

There are signs that a raider is now working between Australia and Mauritius, for two ships are overdue. A moderately sound report indicates that two blockade runners are preparing to sail, and, indeed, a resumption of blockade running is to be expected as the nights grow longer in August.

M.E.W. reported, as a sign of increasing concern over the foreign population in Germany, that in the Gau of the Upper Danube all men between 16-65 have been mobilized into a special defence corps for the confessed reason that 25% of the population there are either foreign workers, or prisoners of war. This area, to be sure, probably contains the highest percentage of such foreign population in Germany.

RUSSIA

Last week the Germans were attacking the Kursk salient from two directions. From the north they were advancing along the railway to Kursk from Orel. From the south a force, alleged to comprise 20 panzer divisions, 8 infantry divisions, and additional troops, had established a bridgehead and was apparently in process of enlarging it.

Sudden Russian attacks have revolutionized the situation. To the north and east of Orel, the Russians have apparently effected good bulges in the German line, and to the north of Kursk they have recovered all ground lost to the former German advances. At Belgorod, the Germans appear to have lost their momentum, and it does not look as if this attack could easily be set going by them afresh. It was, incidentally, pointed out that the German communiqué spoke of fluctuating fighting, a phrase which has come to be associated with bad going for their forces.

Reasons for the German attack might be one, or more, of these four:

1) to shorten the line

2) to create propaganda for home consumption

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[illegible] an anticipated Russian attack,

[illegible] simply to use up as many Russian forces as possi[illegible]

The Russian General Staff report their satisfaction with the present st[illegible] of the battle. They claim considerable German losses. On the other hand, the War Office expressed scepticism about the detailed published Russian claims for the destruction of tanks, as also did the Air Ministry for the figures of air casualties.

Concerning the Russian offensives on the Lower Donets and in the Kuban, there is little knowledge. The scale of operations is unknown. It is thought that the Germans may have been somewhat apprehensive about this area and yet have been unable to prepare sufficiently for the actual attack.

Information about the G.A.F. is scanty. At first, the Germans may have put out as many as 1000 sorties per day in support of their offensive. Clearly this number fell off, partly on account of the weather. Then, when offensives were held up, air action went over to the defensive and concentrated upon close support.

By sea, Russian R-boats shot up Mariupol and Taganrog.

FAR EAST:

From Burma, there is no news.

In New Guinea, the Mubo area has been wholly cleared of Japs. American forces advanced northwestwards from Nassau Bay to join with the Australians, thus cutting off 1200 Japanese northeast of Mubo. At the same time, another Australian force, to the south of Salamaua, prevented reinforcement from reaching the enemy. Thus, by the 15th, all organised resistance was overcome. Japanese casualties were under 1000, and Allied casualties were slight.

In New Georgia, American forces are advancing slowly upon Munda from the northwest and southeast, in which direction they are said to be within two miles of the airfield.

The J.A.F. in the Solomons area has, since the start of operations on June 30th, delivered 1100 operational sorties, with loss of 280. In this last week sorties amounted to 230 and losses 82.

The total force in the Australian area has maintained its strength at about 400, or may even have slightly increased. Some aircraft have doubtless been staged over from the west, and reinforcement of between 40 and 70 has been either ferried down from the north, or flown in from the Marshalls.

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In general, the strength of the Army Airforce has increased, for the operational sorties have been performed almost entirely by naval aircraft. 80 percent of the sorties were executed against Rendova and Munda, and all of these involved navy aircraft, except in the raid on the 14th when some army planes participated to an extent as yet unknown.

In the western sector of the are, the strength is now 280 as compared with 330 at the opening of operations. The force has been maintained by withdrawals from Malaya, Sumatra, Siam, in which area it is now thought there is a total of 150 planes.

Further information on the last operation from the western sector, the raid against Port Darwin on the 6th, suggests that the operation was based upon Java with an advance base in Timor. This implies that the strength in Java has been maintained, while apparently the strength in the Celebes has diminished.

Certain main units of the Southern Pacific Fleet were observed on the 15th proceeding southward 200 miles north of Truk. These included two aircraft carriers, one auxiliary carrier, one seaplane tender, two cruisers, and a number of destroyers.

In the central Solomons, the Japs are using destroyers and barges to reinforce and supply Munda from the west over the Munda Bar. Vila, on the other hand, can be supplied directly by way of the Blackett Straits.

During the week there has been considerable action by light naval forces in the Solomons area, and a number of successes are reported against enemy vessels. In the northern Solomons an air-raid on the 14th sank numerous vessels and more were sunk on the 17th.

From the N.E.I. come reports of the building of more wooden ships of 200 tons burden. They are being equipped with diesel engines from Japan and are [redacted] to be intended to relieve a million tons of coastal shipping.

In the Aleutians, American light naval forces three times shelled Kiska Cove, on Kiska.

[redacted]

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Sicily

(1)

~~J.I.C. MEETING - JULY 10th, 1943.~~

The plan for the Sicilian operation was as follows. Early in the morning on the 10th July landings were to be made to form a bridgehead from the south of Catania to east of Licata. Enemy airfields within the area were to be seized in order that enemy air defences in northern and west Sicily could be contained. Montgomery with the Eighth Army was to land at Avola, and on all three sides of Cape Passero. United States troops, under Patton, were to land at points centering on Punta Secca, Gela and Licata. British airborne troops were to be dropped at 11 o'clock Friday night north-west of Syracuse to seize the seaplane base there. American airborne troops were to be dropped at the same time north of Gela to seize airfields at Biscari and Ponte Olivo.

Enemy defences were as follows: 114,000 Italian coastal troops manning coast guns and antiaircraft guns, plus five first-line divisions (of which one division is excellent, the other four not better than average). Of these, three divisions were in eastern Sicily, two in western Sicily. There was a total of 183,000 Italian troops on the Island, of which 96,000 were in the eastern half. There were two first-line German divisions, plus a number of miscellaneous ground troops of the Luftwaffe and anti-aircraft troops. In all, there were about 145,000 German troops, plus 11,[illegible] flak troops. The Germans had 180 tanks (Italian tank strength not known, but supposed to consist chiefly of out-of-date French tanks). One German division, complete in strength, was scattered about the center and west; the other German division, probably not at full strength, was in the Catania area.

In general, the first 48 hours of the operation went wholly according to plan. British airborne troops landed from 137 gliders behind Syracuse and captured their objectives in the port. Dumaise were dropped by parachute at Catania. United States airborne troops landed successfully near Gela in spite of a high wind. All seaborne troops landed successfully. The British 5th and 50th Divisions landed north of Avola, overcome stiff

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As background for air operations, the Air Ministry reported that on the night of the 5th/6th the biggest raid on Africa by enemy bombers was made, chiefly at Biserta. 75 L.R.B.s were used, the largest number by 20 or 30 in months. In the actual operation against Sicily between 600-800 Spitfire sorties were made as cover, plus almost as many by other types combined. The scale of reply by the G.A.F. and I.A.F. was amazingly small. On 10th July, offensive sorties were made chiefly by fighter-bombers to the extent of 100, more or less. Defensive sorties by S.E.F. may have been 150, more or less, over the area. It is thought that enemy fighter-bombers are now based either in Sardinia, or in southern Italy and that they make merely temporary use of advance bases in Sicily. Enemy fighter-bomber strength appears capable of putting in the air over Sicily 30-40 fighter-bombers, plus another 30 from southern Italy, plus 30-40 T.E.F. used in offensive bombing. The number of enemy L.R.B.s is apparently unchanged, though precise details are lacking. Torpedo-bombers are expected to operate from southern France. In answer to a question the Air Ministry said that probably our bombing Sicilian airfields had helped bring about the surprisingly small enemy air activity. Enemy strength in fighter-bombers particularly would seem to permit greater activity than was shown on 10th and 11th July.

M.E.F. reported a marked increase in the scale of oil shipments by sea direct from Constanza to the Aegean. From a weekly average of 3,500 tons, these shipments have, in the last three weeks, increased to 21,000 tons. Apparently less oil has in these three weeks been shipped to Aegean areas by Balkan railways. No cruiser has left Sicily for six weeks.

The War Office reported no important changes in enemy order of battle in west or east. One German division has left France and is moving south into Italy, making a decrease of one German division in France and the Low Countries. There are now, therefore, 41 German divisions in France, and 7 in Italy and the Balkans. Two S.S. divisions are forming in Poland. An unidentified division, once in Poland, is now in Russia. German divisions in Poland, therefore, fall from 19 to 18. German divisions in Russia rise from 197 to 198.

For the first time in months there was a German L.R.B. attack on England on 9th July. Only 20 enemy planes were used. The chief air news in the western theatre is the improved record made by F.W. 200s.

The West (1)

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stationed at Bordeaux. [illegible]

in the Bay of Biscay. It looks as if these F.W.s had been given more skilful pilots and perhaps better equipment. It is felt that they may constitute a real menace to shipping in that area in the future.

The situation of the German Navy is unchanged. It was a quiet week for U-boats which had no success in the North Atlantic. The U-boats appear to be moving towards areas where we are not as well organised, notably the West Indies, west Africa, and the Cape of Good Hope. They have also had success in the Indian Ocean. U-boat activity in the Mediterranean has been very slight in view of the huge concentration of Allied shipping there. Only 5 attacks on Allied ships have been reported from that sea. Stockholm has been unable to confirm a rumor that German ratings in Kiel have been making disturbances. The Admiralty believes that civilian morale in north German ports is low but is unwilling to conclude that German naval morale in these ports is as yet much affected. 30 U-boats are believed to be at sea. The Admiralty believes that though there is not wholesale return of U-boats to base, those that return in ordinary courses are being fitted with antiaircraft guns.

M.E.W. reported that in the R.A.F. raid on Dortmund on the night of 23rd/24th May, the synthetic benzine plant there was badly damaged. No sign of repairs being made have yet been noted. M.E.W. has no confirmation of the report that the Germans are changing from field grey to brown as a color for German uniforms, but it is believed that the particular dye used in field grey constitutes a bottleneck because of successful British bombing. M.E.W. believes reports that Germany is to send grain to Finland to cover a serious deficit there are correct. In general, M.E.W. believes that crop prospects in enemy-occupied Europe are very good. German stocks are not being requisitioned to deliver barley which means apparently that barley can be spared for animal fodder.

The War Office reported that the Russian offensive in Karelia has now lasted for 8 days. Never before in Russia have the Germans achieved as much in the first eight days of an offensive. German objectives are believed to be

1) to shorten the line
2) to provide some good news for the German people
3) to forestall a Russian offensive

Russia
10

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4) to get a haul of Russian prisoners.

The War Office is clearly not of the belief that this was planned as a great all-out German offensive. The specific situation seems to be as follows. Two attacks, one north and one south of the bulge were made. The northern attack was made north-west from Orel on a 25-30 mile front, with 17 divisions including 6 panzer divisions. 8 divisions are believed to be still in reserve on this northern front. By 11th July this attack had advanced about 12 miles. The southern attack was made on a 25 mile front on the railroad north from Bielgorod, with 19 divisions including 10 panzer divisions. It is believed the Germans have no reserves on this southern front. This southern attack has been more successful and has gained about 20-22 miles which has fanned out westward. In the center of the bulge, as yet inactive, there are 10 infantry divisions, plus one panzer division. There has apparently been no German breakthrough and the Russian General Staff are still confident.

Flying weather has been bad in central Russia in the last few days, and this may explain the recent drop in aerial activity. The Air Ministry believes that in south Russia the G.A.F. is being helped by Hungarian and Rumanian airmen flying German aircraft older than that used by the G.A.F. itself. The Air Ministry believes there is no I.A.F. left in Russia.

M.E.W. reported that Russian harvest prospects have been so improved by recent rains after the drought in the spring that the whole picture is favorable. In Russia harvest prospects vary by region, but run from moderate to very good. Prospects for the harvest in Siberia, where the drought continues, are poor. The whole situation looks much better than it did [illegible].

Land activities in Burma were restricted to a successful raid by two companies of infantry on Mongkow on the 8th July. The British withdrew after killing Japanese and identifying the 143rd regiment. Flying continues about Hassan Bay in New Guinea. More U.S. troops have been landed. The Japanese at Salamaua have been reinforced from [illegible] to [illegible]. The Australians have taken a useful observation hill

Far East (8)

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northwest of Mubo.

There is nothing new as to the air situation in China and Burma. In the south-west Pacific there is no change in enemy strength. Total J.A.F. strength in this theatre, which includes N.E.I., is estimated at 470 of all types of which 176 are in New Guinea, 160 in New Britain, 130 in the Solomons. The Japanese activity in New Guinea has been about 80 bomber sorties daily, 60-70 fighter sorties. In the Solomons, Japanese activity has been 100 bomber sorties and 200-300 fighter sorties. Their losses in the Solomons have run 20% for the bombers, 15% for the fighters. Airplane reinforcements are expected to arrive in the Solomons from Japan and the Marshall Islands.

There are signs that some major units of the Japanese fleet have returned to Truk from home waters. In the south-west Pacific, Japanese have opposed Allied operations in the Solomons with light surface forces only. A heavy cruiser was reported on the 6th July near Bougainville and two heavy cruisers were reported on the 10th July near Kavieng, but these have not appeared in action. Considerably increased United States submarine action has been recorded from the Pacific.

[redacted]

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J.I.C. MEETING - June 7, 1943.

THE MEDITERRANEAN:

In Italy proper there are now thought to be elements of two German divisions, probably motorised divisions. In Southern Italy it is thought that one Italian division has left for Sardinia and been replaced by a division from the Balkans.

In Sicily there is no change. Germans number 27,000 and the Italian forces comprise 4 divisions, with extras, to a total of 230,000.

In Sardinia, German forces have been slightly reinforced and now total 9,000 field forces and 5,000 flak. Italian divisions have now probably increased from two to three with the arrival of the division from South Italy.

In Corsica, there are two Italian divisions, with extra forces and flak troops, to a total of 75,000. There has been a trickle of German reinforcements to the Aegean and their troops on Rhodes now number 4000 to 5000, including flak troops.

The distribution of Italian cruisers is as follows:

8" cruisers:
The Balzano is nearly ready.
The Gorizia may be ready by mid-July.

6" cruisers:
Two are in Genoa, and one under repair, to be ready at the end of June.
One in Spezzia, one in Taranto, one at Pola as a training ship.

Light cruisers:
One at Taranto.
One at Spezzia will not be ready for two months.
Two under way at Ancona.
One under way at (Castellamare?)
One at Genoa being converted into an aircraft carrier.
One at Palermo damaged.

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One launched, [illegible]
work at Spezzia.
Two laid down.
Two not located (making up the 12 on the program).

Nine Italian subs are at Bordeaux, and six of these are being converted into blockade runners which will carry a load of about 200 tons.

The G.A.F. is still counted at 950 in the Mediterranean area. Of these the 200-odd L.R.B. have continued to move away from Sicily and are now none of them permanently based there; they are stationed along the mainland, and use the island for A.L.G. The fighter force, including 250-300 S.E.F. and 100-150 T.E.F., has been in this area for a considerable time with little change of units; these have been withdrawn only for a fortnight or so at a time to allow for repair.

The airforce has shown comparatively little activity. The L.R.B. have carried out raids against the African coast on a small scale. The chief activity has been almost daily raids by F.B. against Malta; although few of the attackers reach the Island, this effort is evidence of the strong F.B. force maintained. In answer to a question, the reporter said that the only visible reason for action against Malta was the convenient situation of the Island within F.B. range.

THE WEST:

The number of German divisions in France has risen from 36 to 38 by transfer of divisions from Germany. The number in Germany has decreased to 37. In Russia the number is now set at 188, an increase by 5 field training divisions which have hitherto not been counted in.

The only significant change in G.A.F. disposition is the basing of a S.E. day fighter Staffel in the Berlin area for the first time in about two years. This is regarded as a cheerful indication of nervousness.

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The submarine campaign has experienced a satisfactory week. 185 subs are operative in the Atlantic. Only three ships have been torpedoed, but 44 attacks have been made on subs, of which 26 by aircraft.

It is thought that the Graf Zeppelin has started its trials in the Baltic.

RUSSIA:

The Germans claim to have completed certain operations against partisans. What action has been proceeding in the neighbourhood of Orel, Kursk and the Donetz seems to result from Russian probing, and this would indicate that the Russians are retaining some initiative. On the Taman peninsula, the Russians are encountering strong resistance.

The heavy bombing on both sides may be the prelude to an offensive by either, but there are no definite indications. Many rumors and reports continue to circulate which support the German propaganda announcement that no major offensive will be undertaken. There is a report that the proposal for a joint Finnish and German attack on Leningrad failed because the Finns refused to cooperate. Yet another report claims that Hitler has agreed to postpone the main attack until next spring, when all forces can be mobilized.

In answer to a question concerning the Russians' claims in the air, the Air Ministry replied in general terms that there is reason to think the Russians may be gaining air supremacy. One reason for so thinking is that the heavy bombing by the Germans started out to be a day and night affair. After a lull on the 3rd of June, however, the Germans resumed this bombing only by night. The Russians' claim to be suffering few losses may also be true, because it is known that the German fighter force on the front is extremely slender. There are only 50 night-fighters on the whole front, so that Russian raids by night should be fairly

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free. Furthermore, Russian activity in [redacted] is known to be working the German fighter force there almost to the breaking point and to be keeping these fighters from places on the rest of the front where they would be very useful. There is reason, therefore, to believe that the Germans find daylight bombing uncomfortable, and that the Russians encounter weak opposition by night, and even by day.

Some emphasis was laid upon the heavy German attack against the Gorki tank plant, which is the first instance for a long time of strategic bombing. This might be regarded as an indication that no major offensive is in contemplation this year.

The Russian navy in the Black Sea has had some success, and has sunk a couple of ships and a number of lighters.

FAR EAST:

BURMA:

The weather has turned bad. There are further indications that the Japs in the front-line are thinning out. The cholera epidemic in Buthidaung is confirmed.

In the Chin Hills the Japs occupied Fort White on May 30th. Difficulties of supply then forced them to withdraw. Two battalions were engaged in the operation.

The J.A.F. has been quiet. On May 29th, 35 planes raided Chittagong, and 8 or 10 were lost. The total effort averages 7 or 8 per day. The strength remains the same and the 3 units have not yet left.

China:

The Chinese are following up the Japs as they withdrew. The J.A.F. made one attack. In a total of 120 sorties, both offensive and defensive - but predominantly defensive -

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damaged.

East Indies:

In the area from Java to Dutch New Guinea, there has been a build-up of the J.A.F. effected in large part by transfer from the eastern sector of the Australian zone. In this eastern area the force has decreased by 50 or 60, but of the 3 units that have moved out only 2 have arrived in the western sector. It is thought that the third unit, composed largely of fighters, has moved to the Mandated Islands where apprehension is reported to be increasing. Possibly this unit will go even further north and join the force in the Kuriles.

A small convoy arrived in the east of New Guinea and landed 2000 troops, so that the total forces on the Island now number 40,000.

In the Solomons some coastal shipping has been observed off Bougainville. On the 6th, a boat of some size was destroyed by two heavy bombers.

Reconnaissance over Macassar has recorded the presence of 16 ships - all of them under 500 tons.

Submarines:

Six German subs are operating between Lourenco Marques and Capetown and they have sunk several ships. One Japanese sub is doubtfully reported to have been seen off Ceylon, and another off the Gulf of Aden. One ship was attacked off Australia, but it safely reached Brisbane.

Japan:

60 or 70 aircraft have been concentrated in Formosa, or immediately adjacent airfields.

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The fleet at Truk has been greatly reduced and most of the ships are in home waters. There may be one or two heavy cruisers in Paramushiro, but there is no sign of any intention to move towards the Aleutians.

Aleutians:

Japanese casualties on Attu were 1791 killed, and 11 prisoners. The Japanese now hold Semichi, Buldir, Little Sitkin, Semisopochnoi.

AK:MK

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SECRET. May 26, 1943.

J.I.C. MEETING - MAY 24, 1943.

TUNISIA:

No final information is yet available on supplies and personnel captured. A summary was given of a report from General Eisenhower which commented upon shortage in some types of Axis ammunition, upon a shortage of fuel, and an exhaustion of reserves, but added that the prisoners of war seemed to be in good condition, though distribution of food may have failed in certain areas, and that morale likewise was good. Axis equipment showed, in general, no deterioration.

THE MEDITERRANEAN:

The Balkans and Aegean area are receiving German reinforcements and the number of divisions has increased from 11 to 13.

In Italy the number of Germans is negligible. In Sicily and Sardinia, chiefly Sicily, are 25,000 to 30,000 German field forces in process of organisation. Flak forces, after reinforcement, number 10,000. German tanks in Sicily may amount to 50.

Italian troops in the south of the mainland comprise three divisions in field formations, together with army corps and second line troops, to a total of 210,000. In Sardinia are two field divisions, with other troops, to a total of 85,000, and 50 Italian tanks. In Sicily the Italians have four field divisions, with extras, to a total of 230,000, with 100 tanks. Pantellaria is occupied by 10,000 or 12,000 Italians, Lampedusa by 3,000, and Corsica by two divisions.

The R.A.F. on the 19th sent 40 aircraft against Crete, with apparently some success in attacking a ship,

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and, on the 20th, 20 aircraft against Djidjelli, which seem to have dropped only a total of 21 bombs on land - a poor performance for so many planes.

Allied air attacks are regarded as effective, but the results could not be assessed. Photos of airdromes on the Islands confirm the withdrawal of Axis bomber forces from Sicily to the mainland, as reported last week.

In Sardinia 30 L.R.B. may be permanently maintained, but the Island is used chiefly as the point of assembly for particular operations. Fighter defense is, of course, kept there.

The G.A.F. are known to have airfields in the neighbourhood of Rome, but there is no indication that their servicing fields have been moved up to that region from the south.

THE WEST:

One unidentified division has left France for the east and may be the identical division which has been reported passing through Poland. Two unidentified divisions must be added to the number in France, so that the net increase there is one division.

The fighter-bomber raids by night against England seem to have purely nuisance value. The numbers range from 10 to 25. They will probably continue as the best value to be obtained for minimum loss.

As is to be expected during the dark period of the moon, daylight raids have revived and on Sunday 20 planes attacked Bournemouth, and 10 attacked Hastings.

Fighter strength in the west is being maintained - is, in fact, being maintained probably better than in any other region. The situation in regard to crews for L.R.B. may be not so satisfactory.

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The only change in the German fleet is that the Scheer and the Graf Zeppelin are unlocated. There are reports that the ships' companies have been removed from these vessels, but such reports have been coming in from time to time with regard to various ships.

Subs operating now number 150, a number equal to the estimate for the 1st of March, but 10 less than the number estimated four weeks ago; in other words, at this rate wastage surpasses construction. No ships have been sunk this week. At least seven subs were destroyed, making a total of 20 for the month as compared with production of 26 or 27. Morale among the crews, however, remains high and interrogations show no sign of slackening spirits.

The first two convoys, one of seven and one of four ships, have passed through the Mediterranean from west to east wholly untroubled by Axis interference.

M.E.W. made the following flat and unsupported statements. The destruction of the Möhne Dam will have caused some temporary damage by flood, but since the chief purpose of the dam was to maintain the underground water level in the valley, the effect of the raid will only prevent itself over a period of time and particularly if the summer turns out to be dry. The Eder Dam made some small contribution to the power grid which will, of course, be lost; otherwise it was chiefly useful for regulating the water level of the Weser and Mittelland Canal waterways, but neither of these is expected to be seriously affected by the loss. Quizzing by the navy member elicited no explanation of the last statement.

RUSSIA.

It is thought that the Russians now hold only two bridgeheads on the Donets - one of them at Izyum. Fighting on the Izyum sector continues.

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...inues to give close support in the Taman peninsula. Elsewhere the conservation policy prevails, except for continued attack upon railways. The Russians claim that there was a big raid against Kursk, but the Germans have issued no information.

The Russians are continuing their attacks on Axis shipping in the Black Sea, which is essential to the supplying of the Crimea. During April they sank one or two ships by torpedo-bomber.

THE FAR EAST:

Burma:

The Japanese have six battalions in the forward area - most of them at half-strength. The J.A.F. is thought to be withdrawing part or all of three air regiments, thus reducing the force from 220 to about 145. These units will probably go to Java, where indications are that strength is being increased, or they may stage even further east.

China:

Heavy attacks have been made upon the fields at Kunming and Yunnan-Yi with forces of 70 or 80 and 30 or 40 planes.

South-West Pacific:

In New Guinea, fresh troops have appeared at Salamaua, but considerable casualties have been inflicted by Australian patrols.

Rabaul harbors 102,000 tons of shipping with five destroyers, a light cruiser, and minor naval craft.

The J.A.F. in the western sector is unchanged, but the effort has sunk from 45 to 30 or 40. In the eastern sector the effort has risen from 45 to 100, directed predominantly against Oro Bay and Wau, and other places in New Guinea. This offensive has been fairly unsuccessful

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and some heavy losses were suffered, though interception was not as good as might have been expected.

Japanese subs obtained no success except the sinking of two ships south-west of Fiji. On the other hand, six German subs are thought to be operating between Capetown and Lourenco Marques.

JAPAN:

The death of Admiral Yamamoto is considered a serious loss, for his experience as an attaché in the U.S. and his attendance at disarmament conferences (where, the reporter added, he alone knew how to profit) made him an expert in the evaluation of fighting ships of all countries. He was, furthermore, airminded and an ardent proponent of torpedo warfare. His successor, perhaps temporary, is regarded as a less efficacious and vigorous leader.

Japanese airplane production is now estimated at 500 per month, and this figure is applied retroactively to the first of March. Of these, it is supposed that 450 or 460 will probably join operational squadrons and the rest go for training. The proportion of fighters may be 320.

There are indications that most units of the second fleet have moved from Truk to home waters. At the same time, indications suggest that an air formation is being assembled, possibly to reinforce the Kurile Islands. The lapse of time since the attack on Attu makes it evident that the Japs do not intend to risk a major action for the Aleutians - that, indeed, they fear an attack on the northern Kuriles where it is indispensable that they retain supremacy. Some comment was made on the lack of offensive spirit shown by the Japs although they must realize that the maintenance of the U.S. South Pacific fleet will have stunted the development of the northern Pacific squadron.

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previously reported. The reconquest of the Island has been completed.

AE:MM

proponent of [illegible] and vigorous

Pacific [illegible]

[illegible] Pacific squadron.

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J.I.C. MEETING - MAY 31, 1943.

THE MEDITERRANEAN:

In south France and on the Spanish frontier there has been no change.

From Spain reports were received between the 13th and 22nd concerning all army groups equivalent to a British independent brigade. Army movements are under way, and apparently special defence groups are being built up in the Cadiz area, Guipuzcoa, and Valencia. The Spanish military authorities evidently have suspicions, despite Anglo-American assurances. The proceedings are, however, held to be but natural precautions; they do not represent a state of alarm.

In the central area there is no change in the order of battle. The German forces in the Italian islands are thought to be nearer 30,000 than 25,000, and there has been some increase in tanks.

In the east, German divisions are now reckoned at 11, for 2 divisions in last week's estimate are now known to be elsewhere. Of these forces one division and one brigade are in Crete, elements of two regiments in other Aegean Islands, 3 divisions with oddments in Greece, 7 divisions with oddments in Yugoslavia, together with two Cvast divisions under German officers. One division from the Stalingrad engagement is refitting somewhere in the area. Reinforcements will probably soon reach Crete.

The Italian fleet has not changed its dispositions. Three battleships are still at Spezzia, and two 12" battleships at Taranto. The fleet is still without

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undergone a lull, and no subs have been seen. The total number has fallen, through losses, since the beginning of the war from 116 to about 60, but this does not explain the absence of activity, nor is this to be laid to deficiency of crews, of fuel, or of morale. It is supposed that the submarine force is being saved up against contemplated exigencies of invasion.

German submarines in the Mediterranean number about 20 or 25 operating from Salamis, Spezzia and Toulon - and, according to definite information, not from Marseilles. These subs are not being reinforced and the number may have sunk by casualties below that given.

The G.A.F. in the Mediterranean area totals 950.

In Greece and Crete, 175 operational aircraft are concentrating upon escort duty and defensive sorties.

The Sicilian A.F. has decreased by transfers to Southern Italy. L.R.B. on the island are down to 50, as compared with 250 a short while ago. The L.R.B. are being re-grouped in the south of Italy, and up the west coast.

S.K.F. make frequent sweeps from Sicily towards Malta, but turn back as soon as they are intercepted, and seldom reach the coast.

In Sardinia are neither torpedo bombers nor L.R.B. - the former having transferred to the south of France for refitting. There are S.K.F. for defense.

In Pantelleria no operational units remain.

In Southern France, and particularly in the area of Marseilles, the G.A.F. is building up. There are known to be 25 bomber reconnaissance aircraft and the torpedo bombers from Sardinia.

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THE WEST:

In France and the Low Countries, German divisions have risen from 34 to 36 because two divisions have now been located at Boulogne and St. Nazaire. This total includes four Panzer divisions. With the normal establishment of 160 tanks each, these four, together with the two S.S. divisions, make up a total of 1000 tanks, but it is unlikely that they are up to establishment, particularly the 16th and 34th divisions from Stalingrad. There are reports that some of these divisions are being re-equipped with Tiger tanks, and this would reduce the establishment number, but information is incomplete.

Reports were again mentioned that personnel is being withdrawn from the large units of the German navy, and this coincides with an announcement by the High Command that such crews may be put to submarine duty. The point is regarded as unimportant, because, since the Germans have the initiative in the use of their ships, the crews can be restored at will for an intended attack.

Subs have sunk three ships off South Africa, and three off Brazil. In the north Atlantic they have had no success; on the other hand, having less opportunity for attacks they have offered less opportunity for kills. One certain kill occurred in the week, and there were three promising attacks. During the month of May to date, 21 kills have been confirmed, and 5 probables, with [illegible] of other possibles. The current situation seems to be causing the German authorities much worry.

New submarine tactics are observable, and interviews with prisoners of war indicate that subs have been ordered to fight it out on the surface. This has long been the custom of the Italians, but with them it was unknown

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...devise.
...is clearly a new tactic and the subs are accordingly being equipped with heavier A.A. armament. In fact, the Germans have now taken a step beyond the system of supply submarines and are sending out specialised flak subs. It was remarked that this policy might lead to ridiculous developments in the formation of elaborately diversified submarine fleets.

German air activity has increased during the past week in reconnaissance. On Saturday, for example, 20 or 25 aircraft covered the south coast.

F.B. are now acting in larger numbers on fewer occasions. The force is being built up and now numbers 100.

The disposition of L.R.B. has been changed by the moving of 60 Dernier 217s, which for a long time have been established in Holland, to the area of Paris, leaving only 60 in Holland. This may mean more activity against the south and southwest of England.

In the Bay of Biscay, Condor's have put on a larger attack than usual against a convoy off the coast of Spain; on the 25th of May, 21 aircraft attacked, and seem appear to have adopted a high level approach which would be a new feature of this activity. In order, possibly, to relieve the Condors for this purpose, BV138s (6 engine flying boats) are being used for long distance reconnaissance in the Bay area. 6 of these were seen at Bordeaux.

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R.A.F. reaction to the raid on Wuppertal was the heaviest known. It is estimated that 125-150 aircraft were operating as compared with 50 or 60 against the Essen raid, and 25 or 30 against the Dusseldorf raid. To be sure, weather conditions were particularly favorable

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modifications of current types, is the He 177, which has been in production for a considerable time. The difficulties, it is thought, have not yet been ironed out. 48 of these planes were seen on one airfield recently. In general it is felt that the Germans have continued to concentrate upon the Ju 88, for any large scale change would excessively disturb present production arrangements.

RUSSIA:

On the central front, there have been local attacks. Partisan groups have been carrying on extensive operations. The Germans claim to have eliminated one of these groups.

On the Donets, the Russians have been making attacks.

On the Taman peninsula, the Russians have launched heavy attacks on the eastern sector with air support. They seem to have achieved some success in the neighbourhood of Krimskaya, but the attack there was on a small scale and it did not break through.

There are no indications when or where the offensive will begin. There are reports of German concentrations in the area of Velikiye Luki, and a concentration remains at the Kursk salient. There was the suggestion of a doubt whether the German offensive will be on a large scale, but when pressed the War Office would say no more than that the circumstances justified the beginning of the possibility of doubt. The F.O. indicated reasons to suspect that many reports encouraging such doubt had been planted out.

The number of divisions on this front is now returned at 180, instead of 177, with the transfer of two divisions from the previous Balkan estimate, and an increase by one L.o.C. division.

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The G.A.F. on this front number 1850 as compared with 2200 at the same stage a year ago. The general activity centers about Novorossisk, where 300 aircraft are effecting 500 sorties per day. These are based mainly on the peninsula but L.R.B. are operating from further back.

The Black Sea fleet is quiet. Russian subs and light-craft seem unable to impede German convoys to the Crimea, possibly because they lack air cover for their attacks.

THE FAR EAST:

BURMA:

The Japanese are thinning out in the forward area. There is a report of cholera in Buthidaung.

In the Chin Hills, the Japs captured two stockades on the road (Falamyo?) to Fort White - an important line of communication. They were then ejected from positions to the west of no. 3 stockade. Four battalions are employed in this offensive.

The effort of the J.A.F. remains the same, but has been employed chiefly on reconnaissance. Three minor raids were carried out, on one of which between 11 and 20 aircraft attacked Chittagong with losses of one destroyed and 7 damaged. There is no evidence that the movement of three squadrons to the south, reported last week, has taken place.

[redacted]

The J.A.F. now numbers 120. The purpose of the increase is unknown.

[redacted]

There has been activity south of Ichang. Elements of six divisions have reoccupied the area evacuated last year. This is doubtless intended to disorganise

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agriculture and Chinese supplies. No large scale offensive is anticipated.

South East Pacific:

The total of Japanese troops in the area is 112,900. In the Australian area, the J.A.F. numbers 800-850. (including Java). This is more than had been anticipated. Activity, however, remains low.

In the eastern sector, 40 fighters have arrived at the Bismarks from Truk. On the other hand, elements of the 21st naval quadron seemed to be moving north - probably to the Mandated Islands for refitting.

The central and northern Solomons are still being reinforced. Several small conveys have been seen in the neighbourhood. Similarly certain small convoys have appeared along the northern coast of New Guinea, and these could not be attacked on account of the weather. Rabaul harbour contained 24 ships, totalling 118,000 tons.

[redacted]:

The First and most of the Second Fleets are in home waters. The Command had evidently feared an attack on the Marks.

It is thought that the 12th Air Fleet is being prepared, to be based in the Kurils at Paramushiro. It may comprise either part or all of the 24th Naval Squadron, primarily heavy bombers, together with the 14th Air Group of flying boats.

[redacted]:

The War Office felt uncertain of the position on Attu and asked for any information available. Reports had been received that of three remaining pockets of resistance, two were eliminated, but there was no

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information about the third pocket, and some feeling existed that other small centers of resistance might also remain.

It is unknown why, having an impressive naval force in home waters, the Japs did not go to the assistance of the garrison of Attu - only a few subs seem to have made any effort. On the 25th, to be sure, 16 bombers attacked U.S. ships, but it was a half-hearted effort and casualties grew to 5 lost and 7 probables.

It is felt that the Japs discount Attu, regarding the harbours as poor and considering that the island may be hard to hold for either side. It is useful to the Americans as a meteorological outpost.

[redacted]

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SECRET

May 4, 1943.

J. I. C. MEETING - MAY 3, 1943.

This meeting summarizes two weeks. Last Monday, April 26th, was a bank holiday; the meeting was called off and no alternative time was suggested.

A change in the personnel worthy of remark was the appearance of Commander Fleming for the Admiralty in place of the usual reporter, Commander Scott, who is ill. It will be noticed that the Admiralty report this week showed an unusual orientation upon psychological warfare.

It should also be noted that for the first time in many months the original Admiralty report omitted the figures for traffic by sea to Tunisia. This was not by inadvertence, because the report included a general comment on the level of traffic. When the figures were elicited by direct question, they were hedged about with emphatic conditions as to their tentative nature. It seems not impossible that this change of policy is related to the inquiries recently addressed to the Admiralty by us and R.A.F. about the technique of estimating shipping losses in the Mediterranean.

* * * * * *

TUNISIA.

By April 20th General Alexander had made his dispositions as follows: in the North, on the coast, two United States divisions; at Medjez, the British 9th Corps with three infantry divisions and 250 Churchills; in the area of Pont du Fahs the 5th Corps, with one infantry and two armoured divisions with 300 tanks; on the 8th Army front, the 10th Corps.

On April 20th the 8th Army attacked Enfidaville and in the course of the week advanced seven miles on a nineteen mile front. The left flank was moved up so as to conform with the French at Pont du Fahs.

In the North the Germans attempted a preventive attack on the 21st at Medjez, but by Wednesday they had withdrawn with the loss of 450

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prisoners and 33 tanks. In accordance with schedule the 5th Corps ... the 24th attacked North-eastwards from Medjez, and has made good progress despite heavy counter-attacks.

The second corps has moved forward on a broad front.

It is thought that all Axis formations are at the front, leaving no appreciable reserve. Any break-through, therefore, will force the Germans either to contract the perimeter or to divide their forces between the Biserta area and Cape Bon.

155 Allied battalions are engaging 88 Axis battalions. The Axis tank force numbers 70 or 80. Axis prisoners number 3600 of whom 2500 are Germans.

There is no sign of any general evacuation, though possibly the Germans may be removing some of their key equipment. Nor is there any sign that the supply situation, though certainly tense, is affecting the fighting front.

The A.A.F. shows only one point of change. During the fortnight R.A. have been removed, since the new forward bases of the R.A.F. have made them vulnerable and ineffective. In compensation, however, Ground Attack aircraft, which are more defensible, have been maintained. It is estimated that the G.A.F. comprises 75% R.A.F.

It has been observed at times that there was a tendency to direct the main effort of the R.A.F. upon convoy duty and protection of harbours rather than upon support of the forces, but evidence is too slender to generalise. Support from Malta has not been on a large scale, consisting of night attacks by 12 or 20 aircraft a couple of times per week. L.R.D. from Malta have generally included in raids upon Rome and Philippeville. It has been evident that on these raids 20 or 24 planes may approach the target but only half that number actually attack it.

On transport, the report was vague. It was stated that as a result of recent losses, services were down, but that a substantial effort was being maintained. It is true the Italian effort was considerably diminished, and this was attributed both to losses and to the bombing of base air

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fields; it is thought that the air field situation is difficult and that emergency fields are being employed. Transport is apparently carrying both personnel and supplies.

The torpedo bomber position in Sardinia is said to have improved a little.

By sea, two Italian destroyers were sunk.

In general, traffic to Tunisia was reduced and sinkings correspondingly diminished. In answer to a question, it was stated that the traffic amounted to about 5,000 tons during the past week, and 10,000 in the previous week, but that these estimates were highly tentative based on incomplete air coverage. Sinkings included one 2,000 ton ship, 4 Siebel ferries, and one destroyer.

The French speech by Laval was regarded as of particular interest. It was pointed out that the reasons he gave for the failure of Axis submarines in the Mediterranean affected our submarine activity in equal measure. For propaganda use this speech is being interpreted to indicate the intention of withdrawing German submarines from the Mediterranean, but in fact this interpretation is mere guess work.

Between November 8 and May 2, 254 Axis ships were sunk or damaged by submarine action, 213 by aircraft, and 27 by surface action. It is believed that the Axis are finding great difficulty in obtaining crews and that this will be one of their serious liabilities in an attempt to evacuate Tunisia.

There is no sign of the gathering of small craft anywhere. In regard to the harbour of Bizerte, there is no way to tell whether or when blockship operations will be started. It is even supposed that the Germans may have concluded from their poor success in other ports that the attempt to block harbours is futile.

[redacted]

The German Order of Battle in France and the Low Countries is now estimated at 32 divisions, in Russia at 178, and in the Balkans

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at 11. There is no confirmation that [illegible] German divisions are moving to Bulgaria.

The War Office mentioned as a sign of the man-power shortage that the German classes of 1897 to 1900 must now register, even if the individuals [illegible] no previous service.

There is [illegible] change in the G.A.F. Action against the British Isles has fallen off, even in respect of the F.B's which had been operating by day and during the moonlight nights of the last month. [illegible] is, of course, kept up.

There has been an [illegible] increase of night fighters during the [illegible] and [illegible] of [illegible] are now assigned to [illegible] Germany.

The only change in capital ships has been that the [illegible] has [illegible] in the last [illegible] days, and that the Graf [illegible] has not [illegible]. The [illegible] of the G.Z. is under [illegible], [illegible] there may be a difficulty in [illegible] the period for [illegible] is considered to [illegible] April [illegible]. [illegible] here, therefore, consider that [illegible] this ship [illegible] late in the [illegible].

[illegible] totalling [illegible] the 12 submarines have been certainly [illegible] in the operational [illegible] have, [illegible]. [illegible], [illegible] the [illegible] should fight back at air-[illegible]. If, therefore, a submarine crash-dives, [illegible] the water may mean nothing more than that [illegible].

[illegible] a [illegible] that [illegible] the Germans, on the basis of [illegible], to a total, at the very least, of [illegible] for the first time in a long while, the Germans failed

[illegible]

[illegible] countries is [illegible] and in the Balkans [illegible] at 32 divisions, [illegible]

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to issue their monthly total promptly; it did not appear on the first of the following month but, in fact, appeared only on May 3. They then claimed 425,000 tons. By a curious mistake, the Oslo radio claimed no more than 164,000 tons. Evidence of the [illegible] of the Germans was contained in a directive [illegible] in advance for use by their [illegible], of which a copy was in the hands of the Admiralty reporter. It was actually to be used at the time of our meeting, the afternoon of May 3, and its purport was [illegible] apologetic, pointing out how hard convoys were to find, how [illegible] the defense was, and, in general, how impossible it was to maintain a constant success.

In answer to question the Admiralty stated [illegible] three of four weeks there have been definite signs of [illegible] [illegible] in [illegible] areas. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of fighting aircraft [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of aircraft [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] to Germany [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of a [illegible] [illegible] on the way to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] peninsula, where the [illegible] [illegible] progress. There has been [illegible] [illegible] the end of March.

[illegible] operation will be an [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] The disposition of troops [illegible]

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supports this theory.

There has been a good deal of close support action by the G.A.F. in the Kuban, especially in the areas of Novorossisk and Krinskaya.

In the north the Murmansk railway has been raided. In general there has been a tendency of late for the G.A.F. to attack Russian railways.

Only small numbers of units have as yet returned to the front, but it is expected that by the summer, the strength will be equal to that of last summer.

The Admiralty commented upon the importance to the Russians of Novorossisk. That base in Russian hands would seriously endanger German movements in the north of the Black Sea. Special mention was made of the R.A.F. mining policy in the Baltic, where a thousand mines were seen in 48 hours. This should affect the supply route for weeks.

M.E.W. enquired about the report that Leningrad has just completed three destroyers of 1700 tons for the Baltic fleet; no confirmation was available.

M.E.W. commented upon the recent decree militarizing the Russian railway staff. No deterioration of the Russian railways is known which might explain this measure, and the suggestions are that it may result either from a new policy of Khaganovitch upon his return to direction of the railways, or from the requirements of a new offensive plan.

M.E.W. further commented upon a report that Chinese labour was being imported to Russia, but it pointed out that the figure of 5,000,000 was suspiciously like the estimate of foreign labour in Germany.

FOR EAST:

Russia:

In the Maya area the Japanese have seven battalions west of the river, one battalion east of it and four battalions in reserve. There is no indication that they plan other than local action. In the Chindwi

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hills their patrols are harrassing lines of communication.

The aircraft previously reported withdrawn have now returned and raise the strength to 80. The explanation of the withdrawal is unknown for if these aircraft were intended to raid Yunnan, they could as easily have done so from Burma. The effort of the J.A.F. has risen to 15 sorties.

CHINA:

60 bombers were employed in four attacks, of which three were made on the Burma road. Losses on one occasion amounted to 1/3 of the force.

ALEUTIANS:

The United States have built up a more powerful Northern Pacific squadron. Its activities against the conveyance in shelling Attu have doubtless revealed its composition to the Japanese. The U.S. air force is likewise more powerful, while the Japanese still have no operative air fields in the islands.

These islands are one place where the Japanese policy of living off the country cannot be followed. Yet a convoy for Kiska would require more than the 5th fleet, which consists of one heavy and two light cruisers with destroyers. The Japanese have, therefore, the choice of bringing in their first fleet, which has so far been posted defensively in home waters, or of abandoning their garrisons.

[illegible]:

The Japanese air strength has fallen to 380, as a result of 100 planes having left on a carrier going north west, and of 70 more, in three [illegible], having moved to Truk for refitting. Even so their effort of [illegible] daily sorties is low.

The Japanese fleet is on the defensive. [illegible] unit is known to be south of the mandated islands.

Supplies are being moved by barge from Bougainville by way of

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[illegible] and Gizo to Munda. Supplies for northern New Guinea leave port in small conveys of routine nature. No ships have come to Lae, but only barges and perhaps submarines, by night.

The air raid on the 17th scored 5 hits on a 10,000 ton ship in the Solomons. On the 19th a 6,000 ton ship was [illegible] at Wewak. Later, a 8,000 ton ship was left sinking off Kavieng and on the next day two 3,000 ton ships are believed to have been left there in a sinking condition. There is a claim that three ships were sunk near Auru. A heavy cruiser is still beached at Kavieng, but it is unknown yet whether its hull is damaged.

At Rabaul shipping has risen from 118,000 tons to 142,000 tons, in a total of 42 ships, of which 28 are merchant ships. Shipping strength is being built up on the south of Dutch New Guinea.

[illegible]

In the Indian Ocean there have been no attacks, but two or three submarines are thought to be out, and one has been reported off the south of Madagascar.

The major effort has shifted to the South Pacific. A ship was sunk off [illegible] and another off San Cristobal. On the 24th a campaign began off east Australia, chiefly between Sydney and Rockhampton, where the Japanese have sunk British ships to a total of 12,000 tons, and an [illegible] ship of 7,100 tons.

[illegible]

[illegible]

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Top ↑

COI
Form 50 COORDINATOR OF INFORMATION

(fold here)

To General Donovan Date May 17
Room _____ Bldg. Admin.

For your information	✓
Note and Return	
File	
Comments	
Investigate and Report	
See Me About This	
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[redacted].

April 20, 1943.

[redacted] - APRIL 19, 1943.

[redacted]:

The 78th Infantry Division has continued to press its attack north of Medjez el Bab. Progress was slow and the Axis held strongly to the hill features of their front. By Friday, however, the Allies secured two important hills seven miles north of Medjez el Bab.

The 9th Corps, after occupying Kairouan, swung north, linked with the French on the left, and with the Eighth Army on the right, and advanced 20 miles northeastwards from Kairouan. At that point the enemy's rearguard disengaged itself, and this Corps has now moved to the northwest to prepare for further operations. It had captured 2000 prisoners and destroyed 30 tanks.

The Second U.S. Corps is regrouping and has established no report.

The Eighth Army on Monday entered Sousse. Patrols are in contact with the Axis on the Enfidaville line. It may be that Allied forces are now in Enfidaville. The Axis forces are working hard on this line now, but it is thought that defences were not previously prepared there.

The total prisoners to date are 30,000, of whom probably some 6000 or 7000 are Germans.

Axis strength is now reckoned at 90 battalions, or about 100,000 troops, of whom 150,000 are Germans.

There remain only the equivalent of three Italian divisions, and it is thought that the Trieste and Spezia divisions are pretty well out of the running.

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There has been some slight decrease in the activity of the G.A.F. and daily sorties have declined from 250 to 200, but there has been little change in numbers of aircraft. There is some indication that L.R.B. reconnaissance may have withdrawn, but fighters and close support planes remain the same. Attacking forces are almost entirely concentrated around Medjez el Bab, where they are constantly used to the extent of 60 to 70 sorties.

Despite considerable wastage, therefore, which has perhaps been less on the actual battlefield than over the Straits and at bombed airfields, the G.A.F. has maintained its strength.

Transport strength has likewise been maintained. Transport is thought to be exerting 75 lifts per day - representing an average transport of 700 men or 200 tons.

True torpedo bombers have been notably inactive, and there has been not one attack by them on shipping. The enemy has relied, in this period, entirely on torpedoes of the circling type which do not require specialised equipment.

Traffic by sea amounted to about 8000 tons to Tunis. Nothing was sunk.

The three Littorio battleships left Spezzia for 24 hours after the first raid, but returned in time for the second raid last night. There is no news of the result.

The 8" cruiser Gorizia has arrived at Spezzia, and seems to be damaged in its superstructure to an unknown extent.

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Subs remain the same. Some start has been made towards basing a few subs at Toulon, and there are indications that they may use Bizerdilles shortly.

[redacted]:

The German order of battle remains the same.

The Italian army is thought to be disposed as follows (though warning was given that such information tends to lag a bit): 10 divisions on the Italian mainland, 4 in Sicily, 2 in Sardinia, 2 in Corsica, 6 on the French mainland, 26 in the Balkans, 4 in the Aegean Islands, the equivalent of 3 on the Russian front, and the equivalent of 3 in Tunisia.

Since January, 1 division has moved from North Italy to Calabria. The 10th Piave Division, the only remaining completely motorized division, has moved from France to Littoria, where it is supposed to be forming a strategic reserve for central Italy. The 44th(?) Livorno Division, the next best to the 10th, once intended for Tunis, is believed to have been in Sicily since January. Remnants of the Eighth Army are returning from Russia, but it is unknown whether, and how, they can be reconstituted. Rhodes has been reinforced with drafts until the garrison numbers 40,000.

In answer to a question it was indicated that the Army Office tends to count one "Axis" division as equal to half a German division in respect of fighting capabilities on the Russian front. In regard, however, to the Italian order of battle described above, it was pointed out that numerically these "Axis" divisions are equal to whole German divisions.

There has been some increase in the West of both

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S.E.F. and T.E.F. It is thought that a unit from Tunis has now become operational on the western front and has raised the S.E.F. total to over 400 I.E.

The main strength of fighters is located in northwest Germany. A new unit of night-fighters has appeared near Berlin. The night-fighter belt remains, but is no longer an exclusive area, and forces of night-fighters are being built up elsewhere for defence in depth. It was noted that last week during the Milan and Spezia raids night-fighters operated in larger numbers than were ever known before.

There has been no change in L.E.E.

By sea, there has been no change in the disposition of the main units.

Increasing activity of E-boats in the Channel is only reasonable and need not be laid to fight-talks by Bevin, or to reinforcements.

Subs are disposed as before. It has been a light week. A homeward convoy lost one ship, 600 miles southwest of Ireland. Three ships have been lost in the Tyrrhenian area. There has been some small activity near New York. The immunity this week is attributed to a considerable extent to good luck, but also to weather which favored aircraft activity and to the availability of new convoy forces.

One Mediterranean tanker, the Portland, of 7132 tons, was sunk by a French cruiser 340 miles west of Tripoli.

[redacted]

There has been no change in the line. Local activity at Leningrad has been inconclusive. The Germans have experienced no success in attacking bridgeheads on the Neretva.

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On the Taman peninsula, in the north, the Russians are believed to have a considerable concentration of troops, and in the south they have renewed their attacks, but have made slight progress despite heavy fighting. The Germans have launched heavy air attacks on the Russian bridgeheads near Novorossisk. The Germans continue to evacuate certain personnel which is not necessary to their present activity, but they have shown clear signs that they have no intention of giving up the bridgehead.

FAR EAST:

[illegible]:

East and west of the Maya, British forces have withdrawn to cover a line Moungdaw to Buthidaung, which is to be held through the monsoon period. On the 14th April, an advance battalion was reported six miles east of Alethangaw. It is thought that on the peninsula there may be seven Japanese battalions, but with a total of only 2,700 troops.

Japanese casualties from the 16th December to the 16th April are 900 killed, 2900 wounded and 13 prisoners of war.

[illegible] aircraft have withdrawn to Siam, leaving 60. Heavy bombers were withdrawn, together with some light bombers and some fighters. This may be in expectation of poor weather. The scale has been 26 sorties.

[illegible]:

Japanese strength in the Island area reaching as far west as Sumatra is estimated at 210,000 including planners, and this is considered only just adequate

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to hold the area against possible Allied attack.

The big raid on the 7th April was followed by three major raids against Oro Bay, Port Moresby and Milne Bay. There are indications that the raid on Milne Bay may be the last of these major operations. For this activity 148 aircraft were landed from carriers. One carrier has now moved to Truk and the rest are in the Bismarks. The loss in the raids was 130, so that, taken together with the number removed by one carrier and the number that remains from the others, the total Japanese strength is about the same as last week. There is some perplexity over the reason why, in view of the aircraft already available, it was necessary to land the planes from carriers.

The timing seems to suggest that these big raids were designed to ground the Allied air force during convoy movements. On the 12th, the date of the Moresby raid, six transports and three destroyers reached Kanoa Bay, half way between Wewak and Madang. On the 13th, 4 transports and 2 destroyers were seen 40 miles north of Kanoa Bay. No interference was possible and it is assumed that this convoy reached the Bay. On the 14th, six transports, a light cruiser, and two destroyers were seen approaching Wewak. On the following day, they were twice attacked. Two 8000 ton ships were sunk. After the second attack the convoy put out to sea again, and it is thought it can hardly have had time to unload. As a result of these parallel operations, therefore, two convoys out of three were successful.

At Rabaul on the 16th, 26 ships were seen totalling 100,000 tons.

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In the Arafura and Timor areas shipping was greatly reduced, and reconnaissance over the Aaru Islands observed no shipping.

PACIFIC NAVIES:

The Japanese main units are about equally divided between home waters and Truk. One or two ferry carriers are in the South Pacific.

One heavy cruiser was seen damaged at Kaviong, probably as a result of the raid of April 4th, but this cruiser is thought to be still effective.

The U.S. fleet is taking advantage of the lull to have some major units refitted at Pearl Harbour. No dock exists capable of taking in a capital ship between Pearl Harbour and Africa. This fact emphasizes the importance of the new mobile docks which will be able to follow the fleet and which should appear in a couple of months.

Japanese subs sank one ship 450 miles southwest of Sidney. There are probably no subs in the Indian Ocean.

U.S. subs sank one large, and two medium, supply ships, one mine-layer and one patrol ship.

A Japanese report claims that a group of Japanese subs appeared in Humboldt Bay on the California coast and shelled the shore, occasioning some casualties.

[illegible]

Nisha has been raided more frequently this month than in any previous month. This is to be accounted for, partly by the weather, and partly by improvement

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of the American bases at Amchitka Island.

No ship has been seen at Kiska for some time, and there is no sign of any intended removal of convoys.

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AE:MM

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January 30, 1943

To Colonel Donovan,

Attached is the most recent report on the meeting of the combined JIC in London.

John D. Wilson

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SECRET

J.I.C. MEETING, JANUARY 11TH, 1943

RUSSIA

In the Murmansk area there is stagnation on land. The G.A.F. has been raiding Murmansk and the railway, as far as weather has permitted. The available forces in the far North are 160 aircraft, of which probably only 20 D.B.s and 20 JU-88s are effective for these raids.

In the Stalingrad area there is nothing on land. There is some evidence that Lake Ladoga is now frozen and traffic established across the ice but there is no evidence that the railway has been laid over the lake.

In the northern sector, to the South of Lake Ilmen, the Russian General Staff report operations of a local nature.

In the central sector, the Russians confirm their capture of Veliko Luki. There are indications, however, that a strong German force, supplied by air, still occupies ground either in the town or nearby. It is thought that despite the Russian pressure on this front, the G.A.F. has here been weakened. There is evidence that some L.R.B.s have at last been moved back to Germany and some have also moved toward the South.

The Russians report that the resistance of the VIth Army is weakening; they say that the Army has attempted to break out, but has been stopped. It is thought that only 100 tons a day are being flown to the VIth Army.

On the Don front the Russian right flank is still stationary. The Russian central force has made progress: The northern group astride the railway which runs West from Stalingrad has captured the air base at Morozovska; the southerly group astride the lower Don is perhaps already West of the confluence of the Donetz. The Russian left flank, astride the railway which runs Southwest from Stalingrad, is approaching on a wide front the line of the River Manych. At their nearest, the Russians have approached within 50 miles of Rostov but it is unknown in what strength. On this front, the G.A.F. have been more active, possibly because they have now established effective airfields further back, and they are particularly attacking the drives which are astride the Don.

In the Caucasus, as a result of pressure and of the strat[illegible] threat, the Germans have deliberately withdrawn in the Terek[illegible] The Russians are advancing on a wide front and they have [illegible] rupted the railway line which runs from Georgievsk to [illegible] Stoppe. In the western Caucasus heavy rains have pre[illegible] fighting. There are no signs of any important air for[illegible] in the Caucasus area.

In general the work was described as very satisfactor[illegible] threat to Rostov increases daily but, it was pointed out,

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SECRET

J. E. C. MEETING, JANUARY 11TH, 1943

RUSSIA (Cont'd.)

the front is 200 miles in length and at a maximum 180 miles deep without railway support of any adequate capacity. If, therefore, the advance is help up this may be laid to difficulties of supply and administration without reference to enemy resistance. The German withdrawal in the Caucasus is deliberate and may perhaps be regarded as a precautionary measure against the need for evacuation but there is no evidence that full evacuation is intended. There are several defensible lines before even Maikop is reached. In answer to a question, the War Office stated its opinion that there are no German reserves on the Russian front and that reinforcements of one area are effected only by withdrawals from the front line elsewhere.

It is reported that part, at least, of the Russian Naval Staff has returned to Tuapse. This may mean a plan for combined operations against Novorossisk, and also for bringing in reinforcements to clean up the hinterland of Tuapse. If these operations were to succeed, these units could be moved up from Poti and Batum, but it was pointed out that units of the fleet could not be safe in these northerly ports until the Germans were driven out of the Taman Peninsula.

The Russians are displaying increased vigor in attacking shipping in the Black Sea. It is hard for them, however, to operate from their present bases from which they cannot furnish adequate air cover and from which air reconnaissance is difficult. Russian subs are also operating but the news from them is vague.

It was pointed out that Axis shipping in the Black Sea must be fairly well stretched. The normal freezing in the Sea of Azov which begins about January 15th adds further difficulties for shipping though it does not absolutely preclude the movement of ships. The Straits of Kerch do not normally freeze over except at rare intervals; 1920 was the last year in which these Straits were frozen solid.

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SECRET

J.I.C. MEETING, JANUARY 11TH, 1943

WEST

There is no change in the number of divisions in France and the Low Countries. There is reference to a new 343rd Infantry Division (in Germany?) which, with the new 334th division, part of which is reported in Tunisia, suggests that the Germans are preferring to form new divisions rather than to build up the old ones. There is also information of a new division, formed largely of Croat troops with German officers, now stationed in the Balkans and raising the number of divisions in that area to nine.

There was nothing to report about the G.A.F.

The LUTZOW, HIPPER, KOLN and NURNBERG are in northern Norway; there is no information whatever about possible damage to the LUTZOW during the recent action. The TIRPITZ is in Trondjem, its repairs probably complete, and it is expected soon to sail. The SCHARNHORST and the PRINZ EUGEN are probably effective and the SCHEER likewise. The bulk, therefore, of German naval forces are available for action.

The naval reporter remarked that the raid on St. Nazaire on the 3rd was a good raid but that it was marked by the increasing use of smoke which, it is felt, may develop so as seriously to interfere with daylight bombing.

Two Spanish ships proceeding under safe conduct have sunk, through no action of the British Government. (The cause of the sinkings was not made clear but something was said on the side about possible mines.)

In the Russian convoy action another British destroyer is acknowledged sunk, which agrees with the German claim.

The blockade runner, RAMUTIS (?), was sunk as it entered the Bay of Biscay.

Subs in the Atlantic number about 100. They were active against a convoy group between 120 and 600 miles west of Teneriffe. Four ships were torpedoed 400 miles West of Georgetown.

Two ships were torpedoed in a North Atlantic convoy.

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SECRET

J.I.C. MEETING, JANUARY 11TH, 1943

1. CYRENAICA

Allied activity consisted of patrol movements. A storm on the 3rd and 4th impeded use of the ports of Benghasi and Sirte. The Allied front places the Armoured Corps in the forward area with Infantry behind, and the 10th Corps is moving forward from Benghasi.

The Italians have begun to withdraw from the Axis lines on foot, leaving the German mobile units. This is taken to mean that a general withdrawal will soon follow, probably to one of the two defensive positions short of Tripoli.

The Germans number 45,000 combatants, of whom 22,000 are to be regarded as actual fighting force. Of the 72,000 Italian personnel, 40 to 50,000 are combatants. These figures, however, include levies and garrison troops, some part of which would probably not be involved in any given battle action.

Supplies are reaching the Axis forces by way of Tripoli or the coast road; practically nothing is coming through Misurata.

The air strength is unchanged. Heightened activity of the G.A.F. continues. The Italians too have joined in, chiefly in ground attack with Macchi 200s. A few aircraft from Crete have carried out intruder operations over airfields and over Benghasi, Derna and other towns. Bad weather has been unfavourable to such operations. In answer to a question, it was pointed out that there has been no build-up or change in the Italian air force in the Dodecanese, and that there are no German planes there.

2. TUNISIA

The Allied attack West of Mateur was temporarily successful but the ground was retaken by enemy counter-attack on the next day. The weather broke recently, to permit an extended patrol by Allied armour. In general the Allied build-up progresses and the M.T. situation is improved, but the effects of the mud cannot be exaggerated. French forces were described as keen but lacking particularly anti-tank artillery.

The German forces comprise 34,000 combatants and 190 tanks; the Italians have 17,500 troops and 55 tanks. The total Axis forces, including the G.A.F. and service personnel, amount to 64,000. The bulk of these forces is in the North; one regiment is in Sousse; all forces are in Africa.

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The G.A.F. has increased the strength of its D.B. and ground attack. The whole force has increased by 40 to the present total of 190, which includes 30 JU-87s, 100 ME-109Gs, and some FW-190s. Operations have increased notably with a three-day attack upon newly arrived ships in Rome. This attack was carried out by JU-88s from Sicily and by aircraft based upon Tunis, representing the heaviest action carried out from Tunis in a long period. This form of attack is what the Allies now expect to prevail since the Germans have learned from experience how damaging it can be. The 88s from Sicily are largely torpedo carriers but they also attack targets in Tunisia, especially airfields.

In the central Mediterranean area, the strength of L.R.B.s has increased largely through the build-up which has resulted from their avoiding extended action over the last month. The A.F. in Sicily and Sardinia is therefore stronger by 40 than it was two or three weeks ago, and now numbers 430 of which 330 are L.R.B.s. Over half this force has experience in attacks on shipping.

Twenty-four thousand tons of shipping reached Tunisia. Three schooners were sank in the past week. No ships reached Tripolitania. The Italian battleships are still unlocated.

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J. I. C. MEETING, JANUARY 11TH, 1943

FAR EAST

Burma. The front 25 miles North of Akyab is unchanged. Japanese forces in Burma number four divisions totalling 80,000 men of which 4,000 are in the Arakan area and 1,000 in the Chin Hills. From these forces it must be concluded that the Japanese intentions are defensive. There has been no air activity. The J.A.F. is estimated at 120 plus 80 aircraft in the Kra Peninsula. There is a report that army air units have detached a small number of men from each group to train in action against shipping — another instance of the army taking over from the naval air force.

Timor. Japanese forces are estimated at 18 to 20,000 of which 15,000 are in Portuguese Timor. There are indications that the army air force is building up its strength in the Timor-Amboina area; they probably have 20 to 30 more heavy bombers and may be expecting more. The exact purpose of this increase is not determined.

[redacted]. There are reports that the J.A.F. has decreased from 216 to [redacted] since the beginning of the month.

[redacted]. The base area is clear except for stragglers. Fifteen hundred to two thousand Japs are occupying fortified defense which are proof against all forms of attack save by tanks. Reinforcements have reached Lae and further reinforcements are continually expected in all the northern garrisons. The present total in all [redacted] is 8,500.

The story of the recent troop convoy is still uncertain but information to date suggests the following order of events: On the 5th there were observed five transports, a light cruiser and four destroyers. On the 6th these were attacked but not hit. On the 7th two transports were sunk and one destroyer was possibly damaged — at least it was detached from the convoy and approached shore. On the same day two transports joined the convoy. On the 8th one transport was sunk. On the 9th seven ships departed from Lae, leaving one transport behind. The result seems to be that four transports were sunk and of the six that were large, of 14,000 and 10,000 tons.

[redacted] Japanese troops number 48,000. There are in Rabaul [redacted] other silhouettes for escort craft, total 300,000 tons.

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It is considered evident that this concentration must portend an expedition since otherwise the ships would have circulated. Yet, as an expedition designed against Dutch New Guinea, the ships could have gone direct, as they could to the North East Solomons. The purpose of the concentration is therefore not determined.

Solomons. Troops in the Northwest Solomons total 10,000 and on Guadalcanal 10 to 15,000. It is unknown how much material was landed during the attempt by destroyers to supply Guadalcanal on the first of January. There are reports that after the expedition, containers were seen afloat on the sea, many of them being sunk by rifle fire. The R. A. F. has carried out no attacks. The force in the whole Southwestern Pacific area is estimated at 200. Current reports are confused, for the Australian Headquarters announce a loss of 107, but reduce their estimate of total strength by only 20. An explanation of these figures has been requested.

It is thought that the Japanese ships damaged in the actions of October and November have some of them now been repaired. Two battleships may, therefore, now have returned to the Southwest area together with perhaps one large carrier. United States forces are still reported as superior.

The presence of a submarine 110 miles East of indicates an intention to occupy the next group of islands in that direction — the (illegible) group.

Subs have been quiet. Two were reported off but this was probably a native report and, therefore, unreliable.

Allen Evans

Note

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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

TO: Colonel William J. Donovan January 13, 1943

FROM: John D. Wilson

SUBJECT: J.I.C. MEETING - LONDON, December 21, 1943

Attached is a copy of the report on the most recent meeting of the Combined J.I.C., held in London.

John D. Wilson

John D. Wilson
Special Assistant to Director,
Research & Analysis Branch

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J.I.C. MEETING - LONDON

[illegible]

December [illegible], 1942

[illegible]: For the action at Matratin, reference was made to the newspaper report and no more was said. The Allies have advanced thirty miles west of Nofilia.

Allied supply capacity was reported in just about the same terms as last week; special mention was made of assistance from American Air Transport. Petrol is the chief problem, but is in a fairly satisfactory condition.

The enemy is expected to make a stand at Bourat. The positions there are inferior in natural strength to those at Agheila, but a great deal of work has been going on [illegible] over the last fortnight. There is no indication of an arrival of reinforcements of men or tanks. There are some indications that the supply of petrol, via Tripoli, is slightly improved.

The G.A.F. in Tripolitania having withdrawn beyond Bourat, is practically out of the book. The airfields, farther-more, in that region, are poor. The force has received some replacements, but by no means enough to bring it up to full strength. The estimate is now [illegible] planes, where [illegible] at full strength should amount to [illegible].

Operations by [illegible] from Crete have [illegible] to about [illegible] to [illegible] sorties, mostly at night, against [illegible] and [illegible], and particularly against [illegible] and all air [illegible]. There has been heavy movement of air transport, [illegible] to [illegible] sorties. So far as is known, [illegible] are not being used.

[illegible]: A lull has [illegible] since Allied withdrawal on [illegible] from [illegible] of [illegible], which was designed to [illegible] in [illegible] with better supply conditions. [illegible] to comprise [illegible] Germans [illegible] Italians, and [illegible]. There has been a report that [illegible] of the tanks are Mark VI, but these have not been [illegible] and it is though the report may be based [illegible] of [illegible] with [illegible]. The Axis forces are [illegible] the bridge [illegible] Southwards in order to [illegible] way to Tripoli.

Three French Divisions, though slightly armed, have [illegible] French troops are in Tunisia, [illegible] in the region of Tunis and Bizerta.

There has been a tendency to increase the strength of G.A.F. units, but [illegible] units have appeared. The limited scope of recent operations may have helped in building up the force.

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12/31/42

Some fifteen operating fighters have moved south towards Gabes, but the chief concentration is in the three main airfields, of which two are at Bizerte and one at Tunis. The one small field at Sfax is subject to flooding, and is in fact now thought to be sticky. There are indications that Pantellaria and Lampedusa are being used as dispersal grounds. The force from Sicily has been on a small scale, possibly because of the preoccupation with transport. There have been some hundred sorties of transport planes, totalling about 150 tons per day.

30,000 tons of shipping reached Tunisia, none reached Tripoli. 7,000 tons were sunk, together with one destroyer and one mas.

The three battle ships of the Littorio class have not been located, but the two 8" cruisers are now at Maddalena i/a the north of Sardinia. The German submarine strength in the Mediterranean has not changed.

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12/21/42

WESTERN FRONT: In the Atlantic submarine activity has been effective to the North West of the Azores, and there have been several subs between the coast of Bolivia and St. Paul Rocks. It was observed that man power problems have forced the abbreviation of the normal submarine course to about six weeks. In general there was a decrease in efficiency, but the crews trained in special Nazi schools show no decline in morale.

The German Army in French and the Low Countries is reckoned at 30 to 40 Divisions. There has been much movement in that area, the meaning of which has not yet been appreciated, possibly more training Divisions being shifted to Vichy France.

L.R.B. strength, exclusive of Norway and Southern France, is about 200, of which 120 is operational. Of Fighter strength the remark was made that it was keeping up. There has been no evidence of the movements of units back to Germany for re-fitting, which might be expected at this season, and it was pointed out that the G.A.F. in general is clearly at full tension.

A tanker was intercepted in Biscay Bay on its outward journey. It was travelling light, and therefore not as a supply ship for subs, and this is regarded as evidence of the need for materials from the East, particulary of oil seeds.

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SECRET
12/21/42

RUSSIA: In the North, nothing.

From the centre, there is no confirmation of the German claim to have annihilated encircled Russian troops. There have been two days of unexpectedly violent thaw. In general the Russians are still on the offensive.

On the middle Don the new Russian offensive against the Italian Army was announced on the 19th. The first thrust advanced 50 miles to a point 20 miles north of Millerovo. The second thrust crossed the Chir, and advanced 12 miles. The interpretation was that these sections might interfere with German communication to the Don Bend, and that they would draw German reserves from any attempt to relieve the VIth Army. But from Stalingrad there is no news at all. At the confluence of the Chir and the Don, there is heavy fighting about the German bridge head which seems to be established East of the Don. From the South, the Germans seem to have driven their advance 30 miles.

In the Caucasus there has been bad weather. The Germans are on the defensive, and are being continuously attacked.

The G.A.F. has been noticeably thin in the area of the Middle Don, and the new action there will require reinforcement from the South. The A.F. in the Caucasus is probably now very thin indeed. It is thought that from Vorosilovsk westwards, the G.A.F. comprises 1,000 I.E. planes; this allows a striking force in which 300 LMB, 250 fighters, 100 D.B. and ground attack planes are in use.

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12/21/42

FAR EAST: In Burma the Japs have withdrawn in Mamngdok area. Their forces there are about 15,000. Small rearguards accomplished minor demolitions, but no major ones. There is established one regiment on an island north of Akyab. There has been little reaction to the British air raids. The Japanese raids on India have been performed by planes which moved up for the purpose from the Kra Peninsula, and then returned. On the Peninsula are reckoned to be 50 or 60 heavy bombers, 24 light bombers, and 30 fighters. Reconnaissance to Burma suggests now that the permanent J.A.F. comprise no more than 60 or 70 planes, of which 30 are light bombers. Japanese use of dummies makes estimating difficult. In Timor patrols have been active.

In New Guinea only 250 men are thought to have survived of the reinforcements which landed 40 miles North of Gona. Other landings have been made at several bays to support the Lae area. In the whole of New Guinea Japanese troops are reckoned about 7,000. The force which landed at the Mambari River is thought to have lost all its landing craft: a second force landing at Madang was attacked by aircraft and is believed to have lost a cruiser. The third force also landed.

In the Solomons, the Japanese forces at Guadalcanal are now thought to be between 20,000 and 10,000, most likely closer to 15,000. The Japanese are now using Admiralty Island instead of Rabaul as a base, which is both safer from attack and freer from observation. Lorengau is a good harbour, but not particularly defensible. The naval forces in the South West Pacific area comprise all available Japanese ships, except the four principal battle ships that remain with the Home Fleet and two heavy cruisers, but the U.S. forces with their reinforcements retain superiority. The total land forces in the South West Pacific area comprise 4 or 5 Divisions, some 80,000 or 90,000 men. In general, the Japanese intentions are described as readiness to dispute every foot of ground on the defensive, and to return to Guadalcanal on the slightest opportunity.

One Army unit of the J.A.F. now at Rabaul, and another in Southern Indo-China, properly belong in Manchuria. Other Army units are in Amboina, Timor and the Celebes. All this suggests that the Naval Air Force has been badly cut up. There are indications [illegible] Army Air Force has perhaps been over-estimated. It was [illegible] there is some expectation that our estimates of [illegible] aircraft production would be increased. There is no sigh [illegible] increase being operational. Many planes have been [illegible] were found to have come directly from the factory, [illegible] was found that had been only 45 days out from [illegible] other words the JAF is living from hand to mouth, [illegible] of the naval A.F. at least are failing.

[illegible] have been sighted in the direction of the [illegible], perhaps moving to attack communications with Port Moresby.

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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

TO: Colonel Willima J. Donovan December 30, 1942

FROM: John D. Wilson

SUBJECT: J.I.C. MEETING, LONDON -- DECEMBER 9, 1942

Attached is the report of the most recent meeting in London of the Combined J.I.C.

John D. Wilson

John D. Wilson
Special Assistant to Director,
Research & Analysis Branch

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SECRET.

J. I. C. Meeting of December 9th in London

LIBYA.

The German Forces are now estimated to have increased by the accretion of stragglers and of some tanks from Tripoli to 16,000 fighting troops and 60 tanks together with a large unidentifiable number of administrative personnel. Italian troops number 20,000 with 40 tanks.

The G.A.F. has been quieter during the past week, partly because of weather conditions and partly because of fuel shortage. The strength is estimated at 150 operational planes, of which 90 are fighters and 20 D.B.'s, with service ability 40%. The daily effort has lately averaged about 40 sorties. There are some signs that part of the fighter force, perhpas 30 of the 90 planes, has moved from Agheila to Misurata. Activity by L.R.B. from Crete against the Benghazi area has averaged 10 to 15 sorties per day, devoted to mining operations and some land attacks which were not of intensive scale.

The imports of Tobruk and Benghazi are now capable of handling 10,000 tons per day. The railhead is at Tobruk but full capacity cannot yet be developed because of the water supply. The fresh water pipe line now ends at Matruh.

Prisoners now number 23,489 Italians, and 8,318 Germans. There is some discrepancy between these figures and the original estimates, and the discrepancy is not yet explained, unless it be that considerable numbers have perished in the desert.

Shipping from Europe has reached Africa as follows: 3 ships to Tunis, 3 to Bizerta, 1 small ship to Sus (a harbour which will accommodate ships up to 350 feet in length) and one to Tripoli. Five ships and 1 tanker were sunk en route to Tunis, 4 and 1 tanker on the way to Tripoli; 1 ship and 1 tanker as they were coasting northward along the Tunisian coast.

On the morning of the 7th, 3 battleships accompanied by 6 destroyers left Naples and are lost to view. They are not in the southern ports and it is assumed that they are on their way to Spezzia. A 6" cruiser (Monte Caccioli?) was sunk in the raid on Naples. German E boats are much in evidence in Sicilian and Tunisian waters. It is thought [illegible] a flotilla, a total of 23 or 24 craft, which [illegible] by way of the French Canal System.

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ANNEX. December 8th.

The Germans seized and have available French auxiliaries and torpedo boats which lay in Bizerta.

TUNIS.

The German forces are now estimated at 20,000, and include elements of numerous formations. Among these the 86th Schutzen Regiment of the 10th Armoured Division has been identified, but so far as is known the Division is not complete. On the 5th December Italian troops were reckoned to number 11,500, the total having been increased by the identification of 3 regiments from the Superga Division.

The Axis A.F. numbers 100 Italian and includes 75 S.E.F. and 20 D.B. The effort has been high: fighters were making 100 to 120 sorties of which perhaps 25 were fighter-bombers. D.B. were making 30 to 40 sorties. Even so, this represents some slight falling off, as is felt to be inevitable considering the intensive operation and the possible tightness in fuel.

Transport in the Mediterranean area numbers 430 planes, of which 150 are operating between Italy and Greece or Crete. The service ability of the force is reckoned about 80%. There are therefore 120 per day available for Africa transport. In answer to a question it was remarked that these planes might make 2 trips a day to Tunis but only one or one and a half to Tripoli, but that they could not keep up this rate of transport.

In general the total Axis air strength in the Mediterranean fell through the last week by 80 planes, the greater part of the loss involved occurring in Libya.

In the western basin (?) of the Mediterranean there has been much sub. activity of which the evidence is many reports of subs sighted.

The latest photographs from Toulon indicate that the largest surviving ship is a centre-torpilleur (Panthere?) and that two similar ships survived together with two or three destroyers and two subs, also the old and useless battleship Condorcet. The latest photographs indicate that the 8" cruiser is not intact.

[redacted] ANNEX.

In France and the Low Countries are still 39 Dividions; in Vichy France are 1 Armoured Division, 2 M.S., of which 1 is perhaps partly armoured, and 10 infantry training divisions.

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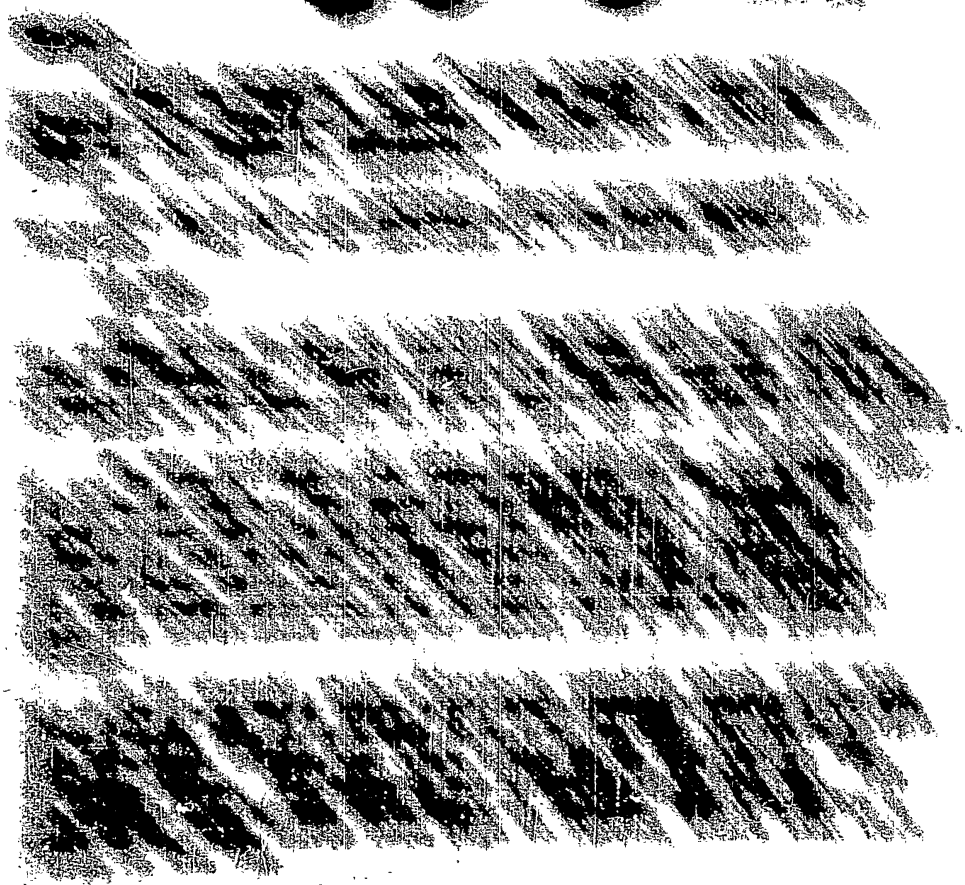

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December 9, 1942

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RUSSIA:

In the north, action southwards of Lake Ilmen has now resulted in the straightening of the line to the advantage of the Russians so that it now parallels the River Pola. It was apparently a small operation.

At Rzhev there has been no change; a blizzard and increasing German resistance have impeded operations.

From Voronezh have come no reports; it seems to be a relatively small operation.

In the Stalingrad area the Russians have gained 2 bridge-heads over the Chir, one north of its confluence with the Don, the other north of the railway bridge. The Russians estimate that in the Stalingrad pocket are 200,000 German troops which will be the best part of the 9th Army, and that these are supplied solely by air. The attacks on the northern fronts have prevented the Germans from attempting reinforcement and there is no sign of a counter-attack.

In the Caucasus there is no change.

A German report that in the Kalmuk Steppe they have cut the Russian communications seems little in view of the nature of the terrain. Possibly German patrols have operated against the Astrakhan-Caucasus railway.

The Russians apparently have air superiority everywhere except possibly at Stalingrad, where they may have no more than air parity. The notable feature in the air has been the German transport activity, employing [illegible] planes including not only Ju 52's but also [illegible]. The withdrawal of L.R.R. for this purpose explains the weakness of their action in the Stalingrad area.

[illegible]

[illegible] 6.3

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12/29/42

SECRET

FAR EAST:

From the Philippines the Japanese report mopping up guerillas who have been operating all summer south of Manila. In Burma there is nothing but patrol activity. The J.A.F. carried out an unusually large raid on the 5th against Chittagong with 24 bombers and 12 fighters; 1 fighter was destroyed. A recent careful reconnaissance over Burma suggests that the estimate of 300 planes there was exaggerated. The main air fields were covered and only 100 planes counted instead of the expected 200. Possible 100 planes from the Burma forces have been absorbed in the redistribution over the Pacific island area, but the significance of the photographs has not been definitevely settled. In New Guinea the position is satisfactory, and the Allied Forces are slowly wearing down the resistance of the Japanese. The bases at Gona, Buna and Sanada have been separated by the Allies, who have managed to deploy through the difficult swampy terrain. Allied supplies have successfully been brought in by air. Japanese attempts at reinforcement have had little success. Their strength is now estimated at 3,500. In an attempt at landing on the 1st, the Japanese lost 21 planes and one destroyer, and on the 3rd 1 destroyer was sunk and the remaining 3 departed. The J.A.F. in New Guinea comprises 30 planes, and 20 or 30 heavy bombers are expected from New Britain. In the Solomons 2 attempts were made by the Japanese to reinforce Guadalcanal. On 30th November a convoy was turned back with the loss of 2 transports and 6 destroyers, and with the loss of probably 2,000 troops; on the 3rd destroyers alone were used and these were all turned back by air attack. There is reported now to be a base for midget submarines on an island to the north of Guadalcanal (named Kanindo ?). The total J.A.F. strength in the area New Guinea, Solomons, New Britain, numbers 260-270, compared with 300 on December 1st.

In China the Japanese have made 60 sorties against U.S. Forces. A possible reinforcement of 40 fighters has moved from Hankow to Canton.

The reoccupation of Attu in the Aleutians is confirmed.

Some submarines are operating off the coast of India and 2 off Aden.

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J.I.C. MEETING OF DECEMBER 14th.

This Meeting is the first to be held under a new schedule. Instead of Wednesday at 4 p.m. the Meeting with American members will henceforth take place on Mondays at 3 p.m. This was arranged because the British J.I.C. reporters have another session on Monday and in this way they will not need to refurbish their reports on Wednesday with the addition of two days news.

The Meeting was also distinctive in that numbers rose to over twenty, and there was greater division of labour among the reporters. Four men from the War Office spoke: One on immediate operations and another on general strategy in the West, a third on Russia, and a fourth on the Far East. For the first time in my knowledge the navy report was split, and a second man, presumably from the Admiralty, though in civilian clothes, reported on the Far East. R.A.F. spoke through Medico on all but the Far Eastern area, which was discussed by McLean.

For the first time since the opening of the North African operations the American reporter remained silent, and information on North West Africa came from the two War Office contributors already mentioned.

A number of auditors appeared, including Colonel Jones, who used to report for the War Office until about a month ago, and including a civilian who came in with Devendish-Meares to take complete notes.

No one seemed to be quite certain of the significance of these changes of personnel and routine but doubtless it will eventually appear. One result of the changes was that the Reports were more discursive and rather less well organised, but in some ways this rambling brought out more information. No questions were asked by either side.

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J.I.C. MEETING OF DECEMBER 14th.

LIBYA.

After considerable penetration of their lines by allied patrols the Axis forces on the 13th withdrew 8 miles west of Mersa el Brega and continued in a complete withdrawal, the infantry retiring under cover of armour.

Of the positions which the Axis forces might next occupy two were considered favourably; the first of these to the west of el Agheila would not allow sufficient lengthening of supply lines and it was considered that the second would be the most likely. This would be immediately to the west of Buerat with advance outposts on the Wadi. Here is a wadi, difficult to cross and hard to outflank.

There is little sign of reinforcement from Tripoli and no shipping has reached this region. In answer to a question it was stated that no Mark VI's are known to be in Tripolitania, though a few tanks may have been got over during the operation.

In building up allied supply lines the railway to Tobruk has reached a capacity of 6 trains per day. Benghazi has been restored to two thirds of its capacity of 3,000 tons. The fresh water pipe line has reached a point immediately to the east of Tocrah and is going forward. Small craft are being mustered at Benghazi.

In the air the R.A.F. has been relatively quiet on account of bad weather and fuel shortage. The 40 or 50 fighter sorties are thought to have been operating from Berka, about 100 miles west of Agheila, one of the few good fields in the Sirte desert. There has been no D.B. activity for a long time and little L.R.D. reconnaissance. Some small reinforcement of fighters has moved from Sicily to Tripoli to strengthen defence of the harbour.

An average of 80 flights by J.U. 52's from Sicily together with a few odd planes used for transport may run daily tonnage of about 120 tons.

In the course of the week one submarine is known to have reached Tripoli, probably carrying supplies, and one submarine similarly has gone to Bourdt. Two ships of 6,000 tons which were probably on their way to Tripoli [illegible] to the south of Pantellaria - one by a plane, [illegible] by a destroyer.

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TUNIS.

As a result of the German attack on Tebourba, the Allies reorganized their Forces on the 5th and 6th. There was some loss of ground but the Americans recaptured it. On the 10th the Germans attacked Medjez el Bab with two columns of infantry and about forty tanks; the allied 5th Corps withdrew slightly, leaving a Brigade to hold the forward posts. The Allied 6th armoured division is coming up in support.

The Axis forces are estimated now to comprise ? 000 Germans, 12,000 Italians, 80 to 100 German tanks and 50 Italian tanks. Two curious problems of identification have arisen. Captured documents suggest the presence of the 4th Panzer Brigade, yet this Brigade was thought no longer to exist since the 7th Panzer Regiment is known to have been transferred from it to the 10th Division. The theory seems to be that the documents are old and out of date. A regiment (388th ?) has been identified, which probably belongs to a division in Russia. It may be explained by the diversion of replacements intended for Russia and now sent to the African front. Additional elements of the 10th Panzer division have been identified.

The G.A.F. comprises 100 to 110 planes and the I.A.F. 20 to 25. They are using mainly the four fields in the north and only a small fighter detachment is in the south. The effort has declined because of unfavourable weather but the supply situation of the Axis is considered satisfactory. Transports are averaging about fifty journeys per day. There is no evidence that they are making double journeys as they could well do. With the help of some Italian planes and some operational planes diverted to this use they are importing some 120 to 150 tons per day, or the equivalent of 12 torpedoes. The J.U. 52's can carry about 10 to 12 men with equipment or 18 without. There is no way to tell what proportion of men or materials are being carried. L.R.A. are making about 10 sorties per day from Sardinia or Sicily, chiefly against Algeria. There is no increase in the Axis Air force over the Mediterranean region as a whole. By sea Italian destroyers are active in escorting convoys to Tunis and Tripoli and in carrying supplies to Bizerta and to Tunis. In the course of last week five destroyers reached Bizerta with supplies, also two ships - one of 5,000 tons and one of 1,500 tons. Tunis received one ship of 5,000 tons, one tanker of 8,000 tons and one destroyer. One ship of 2,000 tons was sunk off Sus by a submarine and another of 3,000 tons on its way afterwards along that coast. It was explained that the chances for a ship to reach Tunis or Bizerta from Europe were favourable by about 3 to 1

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because of the closely mined channel which has been established and which protects them from all but air attack. Beyond this area and on the way to Tripoli the odds are against any ships by 3 or 4 to 1.

Submarines have not been active but eight Italian human torpedoes sank one ship and damaged three in Algiers before they were rounded up. The total of German submarines in the Mediterranean is 20 to 22.

The three battleships which left Naples with an escort of six destroyers have not yet been located and it is thought they may be in Spezzia or even further on the way to Nice or Villefranche. Two 8" cruisers with four destroyers left Messina on the night of the 8th 9th for an unknown destination. It was thought they might have intended to interfere with reinforcements being brought to Malta but they did not and they are probably in Spezzia or Leghorn.

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WESTERN FRONT.

The Germans are now thought to be sending divisions from the western front to Russia, taking even from coastal areas their better divisions and substituting training divisions, some of which are now qualified as reserve divisions. A new training division has been identified in France and a new and hitherto unheard of division - possibly a Marine division - in Holland. Two suggestions have been received of the presence of part of a motorized German division in Italy, but they are unconfirmed. It is reported that the 6th armoured division has gone to Russia; it has certainly left France. There are no signs that the Germans are building up their strength towards the Spanish frontier.

The G.A.F. in Norway is being rearranged. Thirty L.R.B. have been sent to the north. Twenty to twenty-five Condors are at Trondjem and coastal aircraft are being moved from Trondjem northwards.

Reconnaissance over England average ten sorties per day. On Friday night there was an unusual activity when twenty L.R.B. conducted mining operations off Yorkshire.

During the American raid on Rouen, S.E.F. made an unusual effort of [illegible] sorties. T.E.F. units are gaining strength in the west as anticipated. The force is estimated at 500, which includes 300 night fighters. There is no sign of night fighters in Italy and attempted interception has so far taken place in southern France but it is thought that 120 may be en route to Italy.

Along the coast of southern France are ten D.B. which are inactive, twenty T.E.F., twenty S.E.F., also twenty bomber reconnaissance planes which cover the area west of Sardinia.

Three ships were no longer visible in the Gdynia on the [illegible]; the Graf Zeppelin and the Scharnhorst are probably conducting trials in the neighborhood, while [illegible] has probably left the Baltic to proceed northwards along the Norwegian coast. The Tirpitz is at Trondjem with a large repair ship alongside.

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Eighty subs are at sea in the Atlantic and slightly more in port. There is little activity. One heavy concentration of seven or eight submarines attacked a convoy 900 miles south west of Iceland on the 10th and 11th. That they succeeded in sinking only one ship is attributable largely to the efforts of one Liberator which at the extremity of its field of operations made eight attacks and apparently scared away the submarines. This is considered possibly to reveal immunity in the submarine crews, for a year ago one plane could not so have affected their actions, though it is appreciated that the equipment of the plane has been improved in the meanwhile. On the 10th a Catalina had contributed to the defence; both planes observed wreckage, while one escort ship succeeded in ramming the conning tower of one sub.

E-boat action along the channel and east coast has notably increased, doubtless because of the transfer of concentrations from Norway where they were being held in fear of attack, and from the Baltic where they were to contribute to the operations against Leningrad. On Saturday one channel convoy was attacked by fifteen E boats which sank three small ships but themselves lost seven. Some 70 to 80 E boats are available, or which 50 are serviceable.

An enquiry about traffic to Archangel brought out inconclusive evidence; of fifteen ships directed on the westward passage to take independent courses, thirteen arrived, favoured perhaps by weather. On the other hand of thirteen ships on the eastward passage only eight arrived; these were sent on a new system by a controlled route and a long distance apart from one another.

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J.I.C. MEETING OF DECEMBER 14TH.

RUSSIA.

In the north the Russians claim to have sunk by artillery fire two large ships in Petsamo fjord.

On the central front there has been heavy fighting. The Russians claim to have consolidated their gains but there have been no territorial changes. On the Don-Stalingrad front the Russians retained the initiative, maintaining their pressure on the encircled Germans, but have made no gains. The Russian morale is high but there is no disguising their transport difficulties. Today there is reported a German attack to the south of Stalingrad but without indications whether this is the expected counter attack.

In the Caucasus there has been minor action with the Germans on the defensive.

In general the War Office report on the week's operations has been that fighting was fierce but inconclusive.

The G.A.F. is still on the defensive. It has shown a tendency to concentrate on the Moscow and Stalingrad fronts at the expense of the Leningrad and Caucasus areas. At the same time there has been some small building up of the Force in the Voronesh area by drawing upon Stalingrad. There are now No D.B. in the Leningrad or Caucasus areas; there are 950 planes at Moscow and 650 at Stalingrad.

For transport to the encircled troops at Stalingrad there are available 100 J.U. 52's of which 80 are serviceable, together with 50 to 75 He.s. In the long run this form of air supply must be ineffective but there is little sign at the moment of desperation.

Mention was made of the recent creation of 300 Russian General Officers. Half of these were formerly Commissars. One in particular, Stalienko (?) who never before approached the Army, is now suddenly a Lieutenant General.

Russian submarines are active off the Bosporus and also in the Gulf of Finland where it is now expected that they will be able to continue their activities until January.

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J.I.C. MEETING OF DECEMBER 14TH.

FAR EAST

In China one division has left the north for an unknown destination and one division is preparing to leave the centre.

In Burma on the Salween front activity reports probably concern only a couple of battalions who may be out in search of food supplies. On the Assam frontier along the Chindwin Valley there are increasing signs of road construction and repair of bridges. To the north of Akyab some 2,000 troops with guns have moved in, but this is no more than a reoccupation of ground.

For the recent raid by 24 heavy bombers with fighters on Chittagong, the force is reported to have flown from Singora and to have returned there. This may be taken as additional evidence that the J.A.F. in Burma has been ever-estimated.

In Timor the arrival of 2,000 men raises the forces to 7,000. They have extended Jap control of the north coast and may take in hand more intensive operations against the guerillas. On New Guinea, in the area of Lae and Salamaua, the Japs have been building bridges and replacing wooden with metal ones. These are taken to be signs that they intend to hang on there. Furthermore there have been additional landings elsewhere along the coast, notably at the Kumasi River, 10 miles north of Gona. In the Solomons there has been no change on land. The Air Force is estimated at 250. Intense work is being devoted to the air field at Munda in New Georgia which will reduce the fighter range for attack on Guadalcanal to 170 miles - half the range from previous bases. The newspaper reports of the 11th - 12th concerning the U.S. bombing of Munda, which mention no interception, suggest that that field is not yet operational. The Jap naval forces in the area are still inferior. Supplies for Guadalcanal are being brought by submarine and destroyer. A fleet of eleven destroyers was attacked by U.S. dive bombers on the [illegible] five hits were observed; on the 12th the same force was attacked by M.T.B. and one destroyer was sunk, one was probably sunk and one damaged. The reinforcements were probably not landed. In the Principal assembly port of Rabaul only 24 merchant ships

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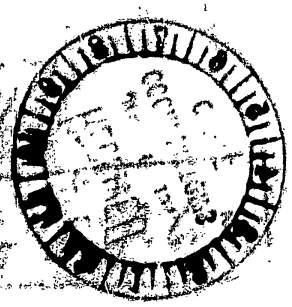
were observed on the 11th as compared with 38 at the end or November.

Jap naval forces in the western N.E.I. comprise one heavy and two light cruisers and ten destroyers.

One submarine was seen in the Indian Ocean.



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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

TO: Colonel William J. Donovan December 19, 1942

FROM: John D. Wilson

SUBJECT: J.I.C. MEETING, LONDON -- DECEMBER 2, 1942

Attached is the report of the most recent meeting in London of the Combined J.I.C.

John D. Wilson

John D. Wilson
Special Assistant to Director,
Research & Analysis Branch

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J.I.C. Meeting - London

December 2, 194 SECRET

LIBYA: On the 22nd of November the enemy made a brief stand with a few tanks and guns at Ajedabya but British forces entered that place on the 23rd and the Axis forces are now withdrawn to the Mersa Brega positions. Their forces are estimated at somewhat less that 40,000.

The railway is open as far as Capuzzo with a capacity of 1,000 tons per day; within a week the capacity will rise to 2,000 tons and the line should be open to Tobruk about now. The fresh water pipe line has been pushed to 9 miles southwest of Mersa Matruh.

One British Armored Division is in contact with the enemy. Two Brigades are south of Benghazi, one Brigade is in the town, and the Infantry are coming up behind.

There has been some Axis air effort on a scale of about 60 or 70 sorties of dive bombers and fighter bombers harassing the area west of Ajedabya. Some 10 to 15 sorties of long range bombers from Crete have extended as far as Benghazi operating upon communications. The weather probably prevented any greater effort. It was remarked that little reinforcement was to be expected, but that under present conditions the Axis A.F. was, on the whole, adequate to meet the effort possible by the R.A.F. In response to a question it was stated that no Me. 109.s were operating. The few that came over lasted, as had been expected, only a week of ten days because they were insufficiently tropicalized.

The only movement in the Italian Fleet was the departure of one cruiser from Messina towards the western basin. Two small ships reached Tripoli, and possible two submarines which may have been carrying supplies. One ship was sunk between Tripoli and Buerat, and five were damaged in Tripoli by the raids of the 27th and 28th. One of these, three were subsequently seen to have been beached. Two or three Italian subs are operating in the eastern basin.

TUNIS: The Axis forces now comprise 26,000 men, of whom 6,000 are Italians. The main strength is disposed upon the line Mateur to Djedeida; thence towards the South the line is broken and consists of various mobile spearheads from both sides. The identification of enemy units has not changed since last week.

The Allied forces are at Mateur, with a Regiment somewhat to the south, and at Tebourba, while the nearest forces to the Coast are a British Parachute Brigade at Oudna some 12 miles west of Tunis.

The American military reporter remarked that operations were proceeding not as well as expected, except insofar as in last reports the Allied troops had occupied half of Djedeida. The difficulty seemed to be insufficient air coverage and ground losses on airfields. Although the air forces of the allies and of the enemy were about equal, the Germans had an advantage of position.

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The American reporter commented upon Spanish mobilization which was estimated to involve 250,000 men, none of whom were being directed to the northern areas of Spain. The Foreign Office spokesman remarked that Spanish mobilization tended to be slow, was likely not to reach the total expected, and possibly was avoiding the northern regions because of their inclement climate.

Four ships have reached Tunis, totalling 10,000 tons and probably eight have reached Bizerta, of which six medium and two small in size, together with two destroyers. Three convoys were seen leaving Italian ports during the week. One group of five ships from Palermo was attacked on the morning of the meeting and four ships were sunk, together with two destroyers, leaving only one small merchant ship unaccounted for. The second convoy of four ships which left Naples was last seen proceeding toward Palermo, doubtless alarmed by the fate of the first. Two ships from Naples were last seen near Messina, and are possibly bound for Tripoli. In the ports of Morocco and Algeria are about 170,000 tons of intact French shipping.

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FRANCE: Of the French Fleet in Toulon there remain two 6" cruisers which were in dock, three contretorpilleurs, three destroyers, and possibly some subs. On photographs available at present there is no sign that oil tanks and arsenals were blown up.

The disposition of the German army is unchanged. In answer to a question it was said that the Tenth Armored Division which had moved to Vichy, France, may be on its way through Italy to Africa.

GERMAN NAVY: About 24 subs are based on the Norwegian Coast. In the Atlantic, there is little change in numbers, but a strange lack of activity. Fewer subs have been sighted from the air. There seem to be over 90 in the Biscay ports, so many that some are unable to enter the shelters. Of the 75 reckoned to be at sea the largest concentration is in the southeast quadrant of the North Atlantic. There are four or five off Brazil, and one east of the Cape. The total of operational subs is now reckoned to be 220.

One Italian blockade runner of 5,000 tons outward bound was intercepted 500 miles west of Cape Finisterre and sunk. The Remus was intercepted on the 28th by an Australian cruiser 500 miles southwest of the Cocos Islands, where it was proceeding northward. The crew scuttled the ship and among them were found survivors from two Allied ships, one of them Norwegian. The nature of the cargo of this and of the Italian ship has not been reported.

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December 2 SECRET

RUSSIA: On the Central Front the Russians claim counter-attacks have been defeated and penetration was eight to 20 miles deep. The Germans now claim that the advance is checked. No confirmation for any of this exists.

At Stalingrad the attack from the north down the east bank of the Don claims to have seized the essential fortified points. To the southwest and south on the Kalmuk Steppe mobile forces are operating. In this region the Germans recently announced that a thaw was slowing operations, but it seemed to be expected that this intermission would be brief.

In the Caucasus on the Mozdok front there are heavy rains and only minor action; at Tuapse, nothing.

Neither air force has been operating at full scale, probably because of the weather. In general, it is clear that the German A.F. is over extended. It is thought that in the Don bend are only 120 I.E. (initial equipment) aircraft and insufficient forces to supply both cover for Stalingrad operations and escort for transports. There are indications that the G.A.F. near Voronezh front has been strengthened in apprehension of the offensive there. The Moscow area may have received reinforcements from Leningrad. Possibly a few planes have been transferred from the Caucasus to Stalingrad, but there never were more than 150 based on the southern front, since the L.R.B. operated from the Crimea. The withdrawal of transport planes to the Mediterranean (150 mentioned three weeks ago) has never been made good.

Altogether 400 planes have transferred to the Mediterranean since October. It was pointed out that although a seasonal shift would normally be expected to remove G.A.F. units from the Russian Front, this transfer differed from that of last year in that previously planes went to Germany for re-equipment, whereas now they are going elsewhere for further intensive operation. There has been no substantial withdrawal to Germany. To be sure, there was an easing off of activities in late summer, but the G.A.F. is now being worked hard. This was to be regarded as damaging to its total effectiveness.

The Russian Fleet has given notice that it is prepared to deal with shipping in the Black Sea. This may have relation to the fact that the Germans have acquired 530,000 tons of French shipping in Marseilles. They will be tempted to use this tonnage in the Black Sea where they are short of shipping, and the need will be particularly strong if their forces in the Caucasus are cut off.

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December 2, 1942

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FAR EAST: In Burma, only patrol actions. A Chinese report that enemy strength in Burma was being increased with a view to attacking Yunnan is given little consideration. There has been an increase of night fighter action, but the enemy has been unsuccessful and has lost three planes by it.

In China, U.S.A.F. destroyed over 23 enemy planes in seven raids over fields at Canton and elsewhere. There was little interception.

From Timor, three raids over Port Darwin totalled 42 sorties.

In New Guinea, the enemy are thought still to occupy Gona. They are holding the ends of three tracks which descend from the mountains. Their counter-attacks have been unsuccessful but their positions are strong and they are thought to number still 4,000 men. The J.A.F. based at Lae number 28.

Some troop reinforcements were landed from destroyers, of which three were sunk on the 24th. Three groups of subs (number unspecified) were seen on the 28th proceeding down the northern coast.

In the Solomons there has been a limited advance by U.S. forces westward. There are indications that the Jap forces have been disorganized and their morale affected by American air attacks and by a shortage of ammunition. The number still some 25,000. The J.A.F in the area remains at 240 but of these, 40 have moved from New Britain to Bougainville, so that the forces in these two places now number respectively 110 and 100.

Two 8" cruisers which were damaged are thought to be again in operation. One new converted carrier has joined the third carrier fleet which is used entirely for transport.

In answer to a question, the Air Ministry reported that in the month of November the Jap naval air forces suffered a net loss and that the total losses of the J.A.F. were probably much greater than the monthly production figure.

There is a report that three fighter squadrons have moved from Manchuria to Hangkow, their objective being either defense against the U.S.A.F. in China or the southwest Pacific area.

In the Aleutians there are indications of convoy movement. The naval force apparently comprises only two or three subs.

In the Indian Ocean a sub sank a ship on the 23rd 450 miles [illegible] of Socotra.

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9476

J.I.C.
London
weekly meetings

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECRET

December 16, 1942

TO: Colonel William J. Donovan

FROM: John D. Wilson

SUBJECT: J.I.C. MEETING IN LONDON, NOVEMBER 25, 1942

Attached are the Minutes of the most recent J.I.C. Meeting from London, England.

John D. Wilson
J.D.W.

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London, J.I.C. Meeting November 25th, 1942.

CYRENAICA: The enemy withdrawal was, within its limitations, exceedingly well done. The Allied pursuit has been delayed on the coast road by demolition and mining, and also by the weather. The motorized and mobile column, proceeding cross country by way of Msus, established contact with the enemy on the 18th 30 miles west of Msus, but not in sufficient force to prosecute an attack. By latest advices contact was established 16 miles south-west of Ajedabia. Behind these advance forces, the 10th Allied Corps is following by the coastal road while the infantry brigades are only just reaching Tobruk.

The former positions of the enemy at El Agheila form a triangle about 20 miles deep, and, previously, a thin line extended 70 miles to Nuruda. The maindefensive line apparently stretches a distance of 44 miles and is considered too long for the 20 battalions now available to defend it. The positions are unfavorable in the sense that some terrain behind them offers poor surface for retreat, and there is danger of outflanking. On the other hand, the port of Bengazi must be made useable before the Allied advance can be made effectively.

The enemy airforce is strong along the coast in depth behind El Agheila. It is thought that the total available is 20 DB, 70 fighters, and 30 ground attack planes which may be compared with 300 total available, before the October operations started. Fuel for planes, as indeed fuel of all sorts, is considered scanty. The G.A.F. now has some advantage over the Allied airforce in that the airfields around the Gulf of Sirte and are on ground which drains readily, whereas the airfields in Cyrenaica get boggy and water-logged under present weather conditions.

T.E.F. and L.R.B. have operated from Crete against Allied lines of communication west of Tobruk. The only movements of aircraft reported in the Eastern area of the Mediterranean are the transfers of some Italian torpedo bombers from Tripolitania to Italy - a small number probably intended for Sicily and [illegible] - and a few T.E.F. to Sicily (from Crete?).

At [illegible] two ships totalling 10,000 tons reached Tripoli, [illegible] totalling 18,000 tons were sunk. 9 or 10 small coastal [illegible] from Bengazi to Tripoli. There are 3 or 4 Italian [illegible] between Greece and Cyrenaica. The Italian fleet [illegible] its dispositions. A British convoy reached Malta [illegible] and was subjected to little air attack, none of it [illegible].

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 11/25/42

TUNIS: The Allied forces were reported reinforced by considerable landings at Casablanca and Oran. The forward posts of the First Army have apparently not advanced much in the last week and the main points remain Tabarca in the north, Sug el Arba, and another point further south.

German forced are now estimated at 15,000. Elements have been identified of the 200th German Infantry Regiment, the 90th Light Division, the Italian 92nd Infantry Regiment, the 190th Panzer Battalion, and the 7th Airborne Division.

A report was quoted as unconfirmed that 4 German Division had arrived in Italy, and 4 were landing in Tunis Tuesday night together with 1,000 - 3,000 troops by air, and that the Axis hoped to have 100,000 troops at El Agheila. The Admiralty, speaking of the same report, pointed out that it included the information that 80 German subs were to be concentrated in the Mediterranean. It was sheer impossibility to base so great a number there and the Admiralty considers the report wholly unfounded.

The report that two Spanish division have been landed at Ceuta was denied. In the air no reinforcements have been identified nor is there much sign that further reinforcements are expected. The scale of operation has, however, increased and L.R.B. from Sicily and Sardinia are making about 100 sorties, attacking airfields, particularly at Bone, Bougie and the Maison Blanche. This is about the scale of attack which was expected at the very outset of operations, and there is no explanation for the delay in building it up. In Tunis fighters, fighter bombers and D.B.s are operating intensively in the forward area.

7 ships totalling 5-6,000 tons including one tanker of 2[illegible] have reached Bizerta, and 9,000 tons have come to Tunis together with a few small coasters. 2 ships were sunk in the approaches to Bizerta, and one north of Sicily. There is no heavy concentration of shipping in Italian ports, which is another argument against the report of heavy troops movements.

In Dakar are 26 French merchant ships totalling some 100,000 tons and 13 Allied ships totalling 40,000 tons.

16 German submarines are operating in western Mediterranean and it is estimated that 22 subs have been put out of commission since the start of operations, together with some damaged to an extent unknown.

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The forces in newly occupied France comprise 11 - 14 German divisions, of which 3 armoured, one or two motorised S.S. 7 - 9 infantry or training divisions and 3 - 5 Italian divisions. 6 training divisions have moved from Germany to France. There is no evidence that troops have been withdrawn to this region from Russia.

There is some evidence that some first-line bombers, Do.217s have been moved to Bordeaux rather than to Southern France, this being equally convenient from the point of view of operation and better equipped for ther reception. This would seem a reduction of 20 or 30 bombers in the Low Countries, but actually the size of the airforce in the southern region is not effectively known.

For attack on shipping between Iceland and North Russia, the Germans have been using almost nothing but subs of late. The airforce in Norway has operated very lightly and comprises only some 30 Ju.88s and 20 or 30 torpedo planes.

Dispositions of the German Navy are unchanged, except that the Scheer is now in Swinemunde.

The main concentration of subs comprises 15 - 18 in the triangle Gibraltar, Cape St. Vincent and Casablanca. Operations in the northern Atlantic have been on a fairly small scale.

One outward-bound blockade runner, caught between Freetown and Natal, was scuttled. Another, which returned damaged to Ferrol, is now probably ready to leave, and 3 or 4 German torpedo boats, even off the Spanish coast on Tuesday night, may be in escort for it.

[redacted]

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11/25/42

RUSSIA: The Germans are everywhere on the defensive. In the north, local operations of small importance are occurring at Leningrad and the Volkhov area. In the center about Moscow there are indications that the Germans are apprehensive of Russian concentrations.

In Stalingrad the Russians have made a triple thrust. From the north they advanced from the Kletskaya bridgehead against the Rumanian 3rd Army to the left of the German 6th Army, breaking through on a 30 kilometer front to a depth of 75 miles, now reaching the Lower Don. On the south, from 10 miles south of Stalingrad they have reached Kalach and this thrust has cut both railways. The third thrust beginning Tuesday, pushed along the river-bank and has joined with the defences in the northern part of the city. It is doubtful that the Germans can stage sufficient counter-attacks and it is likely that the Russians can maintain their scale of operation. It is, therefore, expected that the Germans will pull out of Stalingrad and defend a line following one of the rivers that cuts across the Don bend. The larger, but as yet remote, consequence of this action might be a drive to Rostov which would endanger the whole German force in the Caucasus.

The Russian thrust southwards from Kletskaya cuts behind most of the closely supporting German bases for the Stalingrad area. This has probably caused the withdrawal of the G.A.F. to 100 miles west of Stalingrad and the disposition of the forces over the whole Don front. This withdrawal not only adds distance to the operation of the G.A.F., but inevitably involves at least temporary dislocation which will hamper its effectiveness. The weather has been generally bad, but recent improvements have been wholly in favor of the Russians who are, it was implied, fairly in control of the air in the immediate region of operations.

In the Caucasus the Russian attacks from Ordzhonikidzhe have put the Germans on the defensive. At Tuapse "positional warfare continues."

It was remarked that operations in the Mediterranean have withdrawn between 150 - 200 transport planes from the Russian front.

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FAR EAST:

Gona fell to the Allies on the 23rd, and Buna is invested from east to south. It is reported that reinforcements of 2,000 have landed, but even so the total Japanese force is less than 4,000 in the Buna area. The J.A.F. has doubled in strength, from 22 last week to 48. It is reported that the Japanese are apparently going to land in Wewak further north along the coast. No reinforcements have arrived. The force of 1,500 west of Henderson Field has been wiped out. On the west the have advanced to Point Cruz. The Japanese strength is at 25,000 or more.

The J.A.F. is working on a base at Manga (?) on New Georgia, on airfields in Bougainville Island.

The re-organization of the Naval airforces is under way. are further reports that some 100-150 army planes have replaced airforces in the Celebes, Timor and the N.E.I.; this fusion air strength must be making a serious in-road on reserves for the lull of the monsoon period.

The results of naval operations to the 15th, have been loss of 2 Jap battleships, six heavy and 2 light cruisers and destroyers. This leaved the Japanese Naval forces barely, all, equal to those of the United States in the area.

It is also reported that between the 12th and the 15th 5,000 troops lost their lives in the sinking of transports.

In the Buna-Gona area one light cruiser and one destroyer were lost while disembarking troops on the 17th, and one destroyer was sunk on the 21st.

3 light cruisers are reported to have gone from Truk to Rabaul possibly in order to escort a convoy to Rabaul.
In the Aleutians there is one cruiser.

In the Indian Ocean 2 subs are operating between Colombo and Madras. One is thought to have been seen south-west of Socotra. Two subs are still operating south of Durban.

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